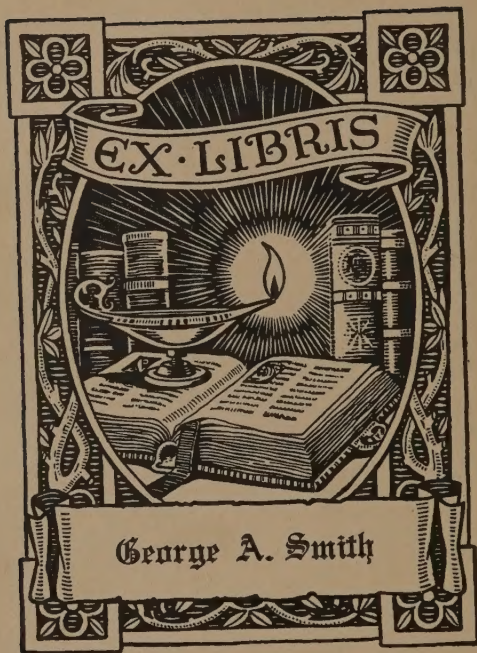




SERMONS AND BIBLE STUDIES

ON

CHARACTERS and TYPES

By

R. E. Neighbour

VOLUME II

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JOB

JOB

God's Estimate of Job (*Job 1:8*).

Satan's Slander against Job (*Job 1:11; 2:5*).

Job's False Friends—

Eliphaz the Temanite (*Job 2:11*).

Bildad the Shuhite (*Job 8:1*).

Zophar the Naamathite (*Job 11:1*).

Job Replies to His Friends (*Job 6:1*).

Elihu, the Son of Barachel, the Buzite (*Job 32:2*).

God Speaks to Job (*Job 38:1*).

The great underlying message of the Book of Job is the reason why saints suffer. This is all brought about by the slander of satan that Job served God not from any love to God, but because he received from God, temporal blessings.

The conclusions of the whole Book concerning suffering may be thus tabulated:

1. Suffering is due to sin, and is a matter of chastisement. This was the idea of the three false friends.
2. Suffering is due to sin, and is educational, and God's call to man to return to Him. This was the idea of Elihu.
3. Suffering is sent in order to make the life capable of enlarged blessings. This was Job's contention.
4. Suffering is sent that satan's slander may be disproved, and that God may be glorified. This is God's version.

Paul said: "I take pleasure in reproaches, necessities, persecutions, distresses." And why not sing?

"God lives, shall I despair,
As if He were not there?
Is not my life His care?
Is not His hand Divine?"

GOD'S ESTIMATE OF JOB

"Hast thou considered My servant Job, that there is none like him in all the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?" (*Job 1:8*).

A great many people are concerned about what men may say and think of them. They feel the public pulse on all questions. They love the praise of men; they seek prominent places in the assemblies and love to be called "Rabbi."

Jesus Christ made Himself of no reputation. He sought not human applause. He did always the things which pleased the Father.

After all, what does it matter whether we have the approval of this world or not? Our chief concern should be to have the "well done" of the Lord. If He says "thank you," all the world may blame.

God said of Job: "There is none like him in all the earth." This by no means meant that God considered Job a sinless man, for he was far from that; but Job was a God-approved man.

In Daniel 10:11 there is a most wonderful picture. Daniel had been mourning and partially fasting for three full weeks. He was deeply burdened concerning his people Israel, and what the future held for them. Finally a Heavenly messenger stood by his side, and a hand touched him and set him upon his knees and upon his hands; then he heard a voice that said: "O Daniel, a man greatly beloved." The margin reads, "A man delighted in."

What greater joy would come to any one, than

to have an angel, fresh from the presence of God, to come down with such a message?

God spoke out of the blue concerning Christ and said: "Thou art My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased." Could this be said of us?

From this hour may our chief ambition be that we may stand before the Lord, and be well pleasing unto Him. Let us keep our bodies under and bring them into subjection; let us so run, and so fight, not as uncertainly; lest when He shall come with His rewards with Him, we should be disappointed.

May our heart throb forth the song:

"Jesus I my cross have taken,
All to leave and follow Thee;
Naked, poor, despised, forsaken,
Thou from hence my all shall be.
And while Thou dost smile upon me,
God of Heaven, love, and light,
Foes may hate and friends despise me,
Show Thy face and all is light."

SATAN'S SLANDER AGAINST JOB

"Put forth Thy hand and touch all that he hath, and he will curse Thee to Thy face" (*Job 1:11*).

"Put forth Thine hand now and touch his bone, and his flesh, and he will curse Thee to Thy face" (*Job 2:5*).

Satan is correctly named, "The Accuser." He accuses the saints day and night, before the Lord. He slanders every good they do, and magnifies their evil.

In the case of Job, the devil shows his hand. His charges against Job, were also a horrible thrust at God. Satan said something like this to God: "You

think Job loves You, and serves You; but Job does neither the one nor the other. The fact is, that Job serves You wholly because You have blessed him, hedged him about, protected him. Job does not care a snap of his finger for You; he is only after what he can get out of You. Just touch what he has, take away Your hedge, destroy his goods and impoverish him; and he will curse You to Your face."

This is just what we hear to-day on every hand. The wicked world has caught the idea of the wily devil. The world is saying that the preachers all preach for what they get out of it. It says just touch the pocket-book and the preacher will quit the pulpit.

Of the unregenerate and of the worldly this may be true, but it is never true of the real saint.

God turned all that Job had over to satan, and soon one catastrophe was quickly followed by another; and still another came sweeping down against this saintly character, and all he had was gone. Then Job cursed God? Not he. He "arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground and worshiped, and said, Naked came I from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Satan was compelled to acknowledge Job's integrity and his own defeat; but he slandered God and Job the second time and said something like this:

"I grant it that Job is an unusual man. He has held fast his integrity; but, put forth now Thine

hand, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse Thee to Thy face; for it is true that skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath, will he give for his life."

God accepted satan's challenge. He permitted satan to touch Job's flesh. The whole Book of Job gives the story of Job's experiences; as satan not only smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his feet to his crown; but as he also moved upon his wife and his supposed three friends to continually nag him.

Never was man more sorely tried. And the inexplicable thing to Job, in it all, was that he was left alone without one ray of light from Heaven to soften his misery. He prayed and pled for a sight of God's face, or a touch of His hand; but all alone he passed through his days of bitterness.

The sum and substance of Job's attitude during these dark hours may be expressed, by the words that Job spoke; "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."

Satan's slander was false. Job loved God for Himself, and not because of what God had done for him.

Time and again this slander of satan's has fallen to the ground. Thousands of saints have lost all, even life itself for the Lord; and they have never quailed.

"I saw the martyr at the stake,
The flames could not his courage shake,
Nor death his soul appal;
I asked him whence his strength was given,
He looked triumphantly to Heaven,
And shouted, 'Christ is all.'"

JOB'S FALSE FRIENDS

ELIPHAZ THE TEMANITE

"Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came every one from his own place; Eliphaz the Temanite" (*Job 2:11*).

Eliphaz the Temanite. This "comforter" was a man with much self-assertiveness. He was a man who professed to have seen some wonderful visions. Concerning his visions he said:

"Now a thing was secretly brought to me,
And mine ear received a whispering thereof.
In thoughts from the visions of the night,
When deep sleep falleth on men,
Fear came upon me and trembling,
Which made all my bones to shake.
Then a spirit passed before my face;
The hair of my flesh stood up:
It stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof:
An image was before my eyes." etc.

One who had seen such hair-raising visions, surely felt that his words should be deeply appreciated. Job should sit up and listen.

The sum and substance of the testimony of Eliphaz was this: "Who ever perished, being innocent? Or, where were the righteous cut off? They that plow in iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same. By the blast of God they perish."

The difficulty with Eliphaz lay in the fact that he did not know all the truth. Sin and wickedness will surely be visited with chastisement; but it is wrong to say that all suffering is the result of God's chastening hand.

In John 9, the question was asked by the dis-

ciples concerning the man born blind, "Who hath sinned, this man or his parents?" They had the same idea as that expressed by Eliphaz. Job was suffering, because Job had sinned.

Beloved, let us not be too hasty in our judgments. Some of God's choicest saints suffer the most.

If Eliphaz had been able to look behind the scenes he would have found that God, through the trials of Job, was vindicating His own righteousness and also substantiating the faithfulness of Job.

If the disciples had been able to look behind the scenes, they would have known that the man had been born blind; in order that "the works of God should be made manifest in him."

One thing is sure—when we do not know the reason for our suffering and our sorrows, we can "trust and not be afraid."

"Not now, but in the coming years,
It may be in the better land,
We'll read the meaning of our tears,
And up in Heaven we'll understand.

"We'll know why clouds instead of sun,
Were over many a cherished plan,
Why hopes were crushed, when scarce begun,
'Tis there in Heaven we'll understand.

"God holds the key, He leads the way,
He guides us with unerring hand,
Sometime, with tearless eyes we'll see,
Yes, up in Heaven, we'll understand."

JOB'S FALSE FRIENDS

BILDAD THE SHUHITE

"Then answered Bildad the Shuhite" (*Job 8:1*).

Bildad the Shuhite is what we would call to-day a "big talker." He is one who says much, but conveys little. He can talk with rapidity, and with seeming rush of words, but there is no solid bottom to his sayings. He speaks in borrowed sentences, and revels in petty platitudes.

The sum of his contention is thus expressed:

"Doth God pervert judgment?
Or doth the Almighty pervert justice?
If thy children have sinned,
And He hath cast them away for their transgressions: * *
If thou wert pure and upright:
Surely now He would awake for thee. * *
The hypocrite's hope shall perish. * *
God will not cast away a perfect man."

Poor Bildad. He too had truth, but not all the truth. He knew somewhat of the justice of God, but he knew nothing of His mercy. With Bildad there was no place for God to manifest pure grace.

Bildad did not seek to go deeply into the sorrows of Job. Like Eliphaz, he took it for granted that Job had sinned, and was under wrath.

Bildad reminds one of the Pharisees, who dragged a woman taken in sin before the Lord. They supposed that He must bid that she be stoned, even as Moses commanded. Christ requested that the man among them, who was without sin, should cast the first stone at her; and then He stooped and wrote upon the ground. When Jesus lifted His face, they

were all gone, being convicted in their own consciences.

Bildad could easily see Job's sin, but he saw not his own sin; even though God had placed Job far above Bildad. It was of Job and not of Bildad that God had said, "There is none like him in the earth, a perfect man and just, one that feareth God and escheweth evil."

How often do we condemn the just. How often do we condemn others, and justify ourselves. Should the kettle call the pot black?

Instead of calling Job a hypocrite and an evil doer, why did he not confess his own sin?

JOB'S FALSE FRIENDS

ZOPHAR THE NAAMATHITE

"Then answered Zophar the Naamathite, and said" (*Job 11:1*).

Zophar, the Naamathite, is the man who professes to walk in the light. He is on close terms with God. He knows all about how to help poor Job.

1. He tells Job, "O, that God would speak and open His lips against thee." Zophar's second speech is even more bitter.

"The triumphing of the wicked is short,
And the joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment. * *
They that have seen him shall say, Where is he?
He shall fly away as a dream and not be found,
Yea, he shall be chased away as a vision of the night. * *
The Heaven shall reveal his iniquity,
And the earth shall rise up against him."

Zophar knows nothing of the imputed righteous-

ness of Christ. He can think of Job only as a sinner under wrath. He breathes in his first speech one ray of light—that if Job would prepare his heart and stretch out his hands, and put away his iniquity; he might have hope.

But one thing is foreign to Zophar's eyes. When Balaam would have cursed Israel; he, instead, spoke only good of Israel. Why? Because God had hold of Balaam's mouth and spoke forth His words. Therefore Balaam said: "God hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath He seen perverseness in Israel."

God looks at His children through the Blood of the Cross. Our sins are on Him. He has borne them all away. We are an unclean thing, but He hath made us white as snow. We are hidden in Him; and who can lay anything to the charge of God's elect?

Zophar has no vision of God as "a gracious God," and no vision of God in mercy toward the guilty.

JOB'S REPLIES TO HIS FALSE FRIENDS

"But Job answered and said" (*Job 6:1, etc.*).

It is impossible to even review Job's responses to the men who stirred his soul to its depths. We can but mention some characteristic sayings:

1. In the 9th chapter, three remarkable statements come forth:

Verse 2: "How can a man be just with God?"

Verse 20: "If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me:

If I say I am perfect, it shall prove me perverse."

Verse 32, 33: "He is not a man, as I am, that I should answer Him.

And we should come together in judgment,
Neither is there any daysman betwixt us."

Herein Job confesses that he could not stand before his own heart, let alone before God. He asks that greatest of all questions: "How can a man be just before God?"

2. In the 13th chapter, Job says:

Verse 15: "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him:
But I will maintain mine own ways before Him."

Verse 16: "He also shall be my salvation."

In verses 22 through 27, Job appears to be in total darkness. He cries:

"Wherefore hidest Thou Thy face,
And holdest me for Thine enemy?
Wilt Thou break a leaf driven to and fro."

3. In the 19th chapter, Job manifests a faith that looks through the darkness to a better day.

Verses 25 to 27: "For I know that my Redeemer liveth,
And that He shall stand at the latter day, upon the earth:
And though after my skin worms destroy this body,
Yet in my flesh shall I see God:
Whom I shall see for myself,
And my eyes shall behold, and not another."

4. In the 23d chapter, Job's very soul is reaching out after God.

Verses-3-12: "Oh that I knew where I might find Him!"

Verse 6: "Will He plead against me with His great power?
No; but He would put strength in me."

Verse 8: "Behold I go forward, but He is not there;
And backward, but I cannot perceive Him."

Verse 10: "But He knoweth the way that I take:

When He hath tried me I shall come forth as gold."

Verse 12: "I have esteemed the words of His mouth more than my necessary food."

To sum up Job's responses:

(1) Job held invariably to his own uprightness of purpose. Chapter 29 particularly records Job's recital of His own goodness. It is like the 7th of Romans in the frequency of the personal pronoun "I."

(2) Job never held to the fact of his being without sin. He confessed that he had sinned.

(3) Job could not comprehend the reason for his ills. He was in much darkness and sometimes almost in despair.

(4) Job never denied his Lord. He did not understand Him, but he trusted Him. He did not know the way, but he knew the Guide. He never turned away from faith.

(5) Job had assurance of some day seeing God and understanding all his sorrows; he also had assurance of a coming reward.

ELIHU THE SON OF BARACHEL, THE BUZITE

"Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu" (*Job 32:2*).

Elihu being younger, had stood by and listened to the words of Job's comforters, until he was filled with anger. Finally he broke away from the restraint that his years had put upon him, and spoke.

Elihu gives some striking statements. He does not fathom the depths of the "why" of Job's sor-

rows; but he goes far beyond the three false friends.

Just some of the striking sayings of Elihu we can note. These words seem to sum up his contention:

1. Elihu describes how God in the night time, speaks to one who has sinned.

“For God speaketh once,
Yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not.
In a dream, in a vision of the night,
When deep sleep falleth upon men,
In slumbering upon the bed:
He openeth the ears of men,
And sealeth their instruction.”

2. Elihu describes the purpose of God in these night visions:

“That He may withdraw man from his purpose,
And hide pride from man,
He keepeth back his soul from the pit,
And his life from perishing by the sword.”

3. Elihu graphically describes the sickness that God sends:

- (1) “He is chastened with pain upon his bed.”
- (2) “His life abhorreth bread,
And his soul dainty meat.”
- (3) “His flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen;
And his bones that were not seen stick out.”
- (4) “His soul draweth near unto the grave,
And his life to the destroyers.”

How striking are the steps above that show the progress of disease.

4. Elihu gives the results, when the sick man accepts the true interpretation of his sickness:

- (1) “His flesh shall be fresher than a child’s:”

- (2) "He shall return to the days of his youth:"
- (3) "He will pray unto God and He will be favorable unto him:"
- (4) "He shall see his face with joy"
- (5) "He will render unto man his righteousness."
- (6) "He will deliver his soul from going to the pit,
And his life shall see light."

GOD SPEAKS TO JOB

"Then the Lord answered Job and said:" etc. (*Job 38:1, etc.*).

God finally comes forth from the shadows where He has remained, observant, but wholly unseen. Satan has had fullest opportunity to prove the truth of his slanderous libel against Job and against God. The whole testing has been bitter, but Job has come forth shining with a glory of faithfulness, based upon faith and love, and not dependent upon temporal blessings and physical comforts.

1. God manifests the wonders of His own power and might in a series of questions, which he puts to Job. Nowhere in the Bible is there to be found sublimer language. Nowhere is there such a revelation of God's marvelous working in nature. Many secrets are revealed in Job 38, 39, and 40, that would profit the scientists and naturalists and chemists of our day to consider.

2. Job responds:

"Behold I am vile, what shall I answer thee?
I will lay my hand upon my mouth.
Once have I spoken, but I will not answer:
Yea, twice; but I will proceed no further."

3. God continues His words. Then Job says:

"I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear,
But now mine eye seeth Thee.
Wherefore I abhor myself,
And repent in dust and ashes."

4. Finally God testifies against the three false friends, who had not spoken of God, the thing that was right as had His servant Job. These three men are told to offer up seven rams and seven bullocks, and to ask God's servant, Job, to pray for them.

5. The Lord turns again the captivity of Job, and gives unto Job twice as much as he had before. Thus "the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning." "And Job lived one hundred and forty years," and "died being full of days."

REBEKAH, THE BEAUTIFUL BRIDE

REBEKAH, THE BEAUTIFUL BRIDE

Abraham's Desire Toward Isaac (*Gen. 24:4*).

Rebekah's Home Life (*Gen. 24:15*).

Rebekah Was Very Fair (*Gen. 24:16*).

Rebekah Was Virtuous (*Gen. 24:16*).

Rebekah Was Sought in Marriage (*Gen. 24:67*).

Rebekah Was Richly Rewarded (*Gen. 24:64, 66*).

Isaac's Happy Home (*Gen. 24:67*).

ABRAHAM'S DESIRE TOWARD ISAAC

"Thou shalt take a wife unto my son Isaac" (*Gen. 24:4*).

1. Abraham had a great desire to see his son Isaac married. Immediately the question arises, Is it the best thing for a Christian youth to marry? We cannot answer that only as we examine certain things.

(1) If the youth has a yearning to marry, and cannot contain himself, let him marry, it is no sin (*see I Cor. 7:28*).

(2) If one desires to be his best for God, there are times when it is best not to marry (*see I Cor. 7:32-35*).

The one who is married "cares for the things of his wife, how he may please her."

(3) If one does marry, the Word says: "Such shall have tribulation in the flesh" (*I Cor. 7:28, l. c.*).

(4) In speaking to younger widows, and particularly to those who wax wanton against Christ and wish to marry, Paul says: "I will that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, giv-

ing no occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully."

Now the above admonitions are all important and all have their place, for those who are seeking to give their whole life to God.

Some one will ask—why, then, did Abraham desire that Isaac should marry? In answer, it is necessary to remember that God had given to Abraham the promise that in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed. This promise was to be fulfilled in Isaac. How important then, was the marriage of this son. No wonder Abraham was concerned.

Young people should look beyond the "honey moon" of married life. Marriage is vital because of posterity. Marriage should always be considered in the light of the home that is to be formed and of the succeeding generations that will follow.

2. Abraham took the lead. He chose Isaac a wife. It is not so done to-day. Nor would we say that it should be so done. Certainly it seems eminently wise that both the bride and the bridegroom should have the privilege of choice in a matter so vital to themselves. Yet we insist—both parties had better ask "dad."

Many a girl would have been saved hours, months and years of anguish, if she had only asked her father to look carefully into the character, the disposition and the integrity of the young man who was seeking her hand.

3. Abraham sought a marriage only in the Lord. He said unto Eliezer, "Thou shalt not take a wife

unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites among whom I dwell." "Thou shalt go unto my country and to my kindred" (*Gen. 24:3, 4*).

It is permitted unto a woman "to marry only in the Lord." It is forbidden that we should be "unequally yoked together with unbelievers."

Of course, the unbelieving youth will promise most anything before the marriage takes place. But just wait until the marriage is over. Then what?

God said to Israel, His special people: "Neither shalt thou make marriages with them (the Canaanites); thy daughter thou shalt not give to his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son; for they will turn away thy son from following Me, that they may serve other gods."

4. Abraham and Eliezer both prayed and sought God's leadings in the matter of Isaac's bride. Certainly this was right. No one needs to dread to talk to God about His will in their marriage.

"The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord." God hath surely mapped out a plan for every life. To miss that plan must prove fatal. He Who honored a marriage festival at Cana of Galilee; He Who said: "It is not good for man to dwell alone," will certainly hear the prayer of the one who seeks guidance in this most important step in life.

"O child of God, wait patiently,
When dark thy path may be;
And let thy faith lean trustingly
On Him Who cares for thee.

"O child of God, He loveth thee,
And thou art all His own;
With gentle hand He leadeth thee,
Thou dost not walk alone."

Whatever else is done, do not go at the "getting married" proposition in a prayerless, reckless fashion. Marriage is an institution established and honored of God, and God will lead every young life in its vital choice if the life is only yielded to Him.

REBEKAH'S HOME LIFE

"Rebekah came out * * with her pitcher upon her shoulder"
(*Gen. 24:15*).

We grant it. Times have changed, Oriental customs have given way to other ideals; but, withal, we insist that time has never made the picture of Rebekah, with her pitcher upon her shoulder, an unseemly thing.

1. It is honorable for a girl to be busy about the home; it is honorable for a girl to do honest work.

The young woman who has the idea that she is no more than an ornament for the gaze of some senseless youth, has missed the real objective of life. Rebekah lost nothing by giving drink to the camels of Eliezer. She stood forth before him as a queenly woman, with a ready hand to help, and willing mind to serve.

There is nothing that so exhausts the body, and so weakens the brain as careless and listless lounging. The girl needs to watch her leisure hours. She must even guard her moments of recreation. Healthful exercise is good, but may God save the daughters of our land from the theaters, the card table, and the dance. The novel and the average love story should come also under the ban of the girl who will stand forth as being God's chosen one.

The girl who is busy about the home and with her preparation for a real life mission, will not have time nor desire to fritter away her days in foolish and harmful gaities.

The girl who takes the opposite position and neglects all home cares and fruitful service and begins to ply her trade of street walking and pleasure seeking, will soon be calling home too dull, and the daily task too irksome.

REBEKAH WAS VERY FAIR

"And the damsel was very fair to look upon" (Gen. 24:16).

All will admit, immediately, that the beauty which Rebekah possessed was not the beauty of her attire. Girls of to-day, too often imagine that their everything depends on clothes. Unless some of these "butterflies" are dressed in the latest fashion, a veritable vogue fashion sheet, they think that they are hideous.

When will Christian girls learn that God's daughters should not seek that outward adorning of "plaiting of the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel;" but that her chief adorning should be "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is of great price"?

It was after this manner that Rebekah and the other holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands.

The girl needs not dress with a severity that would at once mark her as an oddity, but she certainly should dress in all modesty and simplicity,

so that those who meet her will not be attracted by what she has on, but by the gracious beauty of her character, as seen in her face.

The chief concern of every young woman should be the decoration of "the hidden man of the heart," that which is incorruptible, and of great value with God.

The Holy Spirit bears witness: "In like manner the women, in becoming attire, with modesty and soberness of mind; * * with good works, which becometh women undertaking the worship of God."

The King's daughter should be all glorious within.

F. B. Meyer beautifully says, concerning our younger women; "In all the world there is nothing fairer than the young life, which God hath given you. You can enrich the poorest home; lighten the hardest lot; cheer the roughest path, and make weary feet forget the sharp flints."

REBEKAH WAS VIRTUOUS

"And the damsel was very fair to look upon, a virgin"
(*Gen. 24:16*).

The most priceless jewel that a girl has is her virtue. "Who can find a virtuous woman? For her price is far above rubies."

We would not for a moment suppose that the dear girls who read these paragraphs would for a moment stoop to vice and shame. We write about higher things, loftier ideals.

That of which our daughters need to fear is not so much the bottom of the hill, but avoiding the

slope. No girl will ever land at the foot of the toboggan slide if she stays clear of the approach to the toboggan.

It is all necessary to avoid the every appearance of evil. The seed that harvests immorality is the unchaste story, the unclean theater, the unwholesome movie, the unholy dance. No girl can yield to any of these attractions, fashioned as they are to appeal to the flesh, without being harmed thereby.

Another place for caution, lies in the company that the girl keeps. Many of the young men are given to low ideals; they are a menace to every girl who would stand unsmirched in the glorious beauty of her virtue. Boys who are separated unto God, and filled with the Spirit may alone be fully trusted.

Others, than the Spirit-filled youth, may be clean, and morally true: but the saved of either sex, should not have fellowship with the unsaved. "What fellowship hath light with darkness?" "What part hath he that believeth with an unbeliever?" God's Word is: "Be ye separate."

It is almost impossible for any youth who does not know God to live free from stain of some kind; and certainly a youth who does not know God, no matter how morally clean, is not a worthy companion for one who has Christ's ideals of things down here.

The girl who keeps company with the lad who smokes cigarettes, and who attends the movies, and who dances, and who holds generally to worldly ideals and ambitions is to be pitied. No one can touch the fire and not be burned.

"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness."

"I asked the roses, as they grew
Richer and lovelier in their hue,
What made their tints so rich and bright?
They answered, 'Looking toward the light.'
Ah, secret, dear, said heart of mine,
God meant my life to be like thine—
Radiant with Heavenly beauty bright;
By simply looking toward the Light."

REBEKAH WAS SOUGHT IN MARRIAGE

"And Isaac * * took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her" (*Gen. 24:67*).

The story of Rebekah's wooing, is delightful. In her distant home she was busy with her daily tasks. God had, however, marked her girlish beauty both of face and character. God had her in His heart. She had committed her all to Him, and He, in His own time, gave her the desires of her heart.

As she watered the camels of Eliezer, little did she know the errand of the trusted servant of Abraham: little did she dream of the joy that was soon to be hers.

When, however, Eliezer had delivered his charge and told of how God had laid His hand upon Rebekah, and marked her out as His choice for Isaac; then Rebekah did not hesitate for one moment.

With prompt sincerity she said, "I will go."

Marriage is not a matter to be considered apart from the biddings of God. Some one has said that "marriage is settled in Heaven." This certainly is not true of the majority of marriages, to-day. The frequency of divorce and the unhappy conditions

in many places demonstrate that most marriages are undertaken apart from God.

God did choose Rebekah, and God will still choose for those who are walking in His plan and purpose. Therefore it is right, pre-eminently right for every youth to make marriage a matter of sincere and honest prayer. Surely it would be better for either sex, never to be married than not to "marry in the Lord."

REBEKAH WAS RICHLY REWARDED

"And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she lighted off the camel.

"And the servant told Isaac all things that he had done" (*Gen. 24:64, 66*).

How happy the winsome Rebekah, when she at last had covered the dreary sands and at last had reached her future home. Isaac too, was happy. He had been on the outlook for the coming of his bride and her coming had not escaped his eye.

As Eliezer recounted to Isaac the whole story of his trip, going into detail as to how the Lord had led him all the way, Isaac must have been strangely moved.

Soon the marriage bells were rung and the happy pair became one in heart and life.

The rich reward—the far-reaching blessing of that marriage—is before our very eyes, in this the nearly fortieth century since that marriage took place.

Indeed, Rebekah became not only the mother of thousands of millions, but she became the mother of our Lord. For her journey across the sands and

her marriage to Isaac placed her in the line of the lineage of our Lord.

ISAAC'S HAPPY HOME

"And Rebekah became his wife; and he loved her; and Isaac was comforted after his mother's death" (*Gen. 24:67*).

One home is broken up, but another home is formed. This is the will of God. Sarah died and the home was depleted; Rebekah came to establish, upon the wreckage of the one, another home, and Isaac was comforted.

The word "home" carries with it the choicest perfumes. No word so grips the heart and none so stirs the soul.

John Howard Payne struck the keynote of the heart's affection when he wrote:

"Amid pleasures and palaces, though we may roam,
Be it ever so humble, there is no place like home;
A charm from the skies seems to hallow us there,
Which seek through the world, is ne'er met with elsewhere,
Home, home, sweet, sweet home,
Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home."

Home is the most sacred and the most hallowed place on earth, but "home" to reach its climax of glory, must be a place where God is the recognized Head.

Home has the most far-reaching results of any other possible place on earth, for while other places may be dedicated to the instruction and uplift of those who dwell in homes; yet the home is the fountain-head from which the stream of life flows. Home furnishes the boys and the girls that make the state or the church.

From the home formed by Abraham and Sarah, and sustained by Isaac and Rebekah, a stream of life came forth that has blessed the world and is yet destined to even more greatly bless the world; when the Israelites, all of whom are children of Isaac and Rebekah, are once more restored to their own land and blessed, become a world-wide blessing.

Bless God, for a home ordained and safeguarded in God.

REBEKAH—A DISPENSATIONAL STUDY

REBEKAH—A DISPENSATIONAL STUDY

Abraham's Desire (*Gen. 24:4*).

The Eldest Servant Wooing (*Gen. 24:2-5*).

The Gracious Response (*Gen. 24:51, 58*).

The Long Journey Begun (*Gen. 24:61*).

The Eldest Servant Conducting (*Gen. 24:61*).

The Meeting (*Gen. 24:63, 64*).

The Marriage (*Gen. 24:67*).

Dispensational teachings are not mere illusive suggestions, mere accidental analogies. Christ is seen everywhere in the Old Testament. He is its central figure. God spoke to us in the Prophets as well as by the Prophets; He spoke to us in their lives and deeds, as well as by their words and writings.

Not, that the Old Testament saints were holy, as Christ was holy—not that. But this is true that in their lives as well as by their words, God set forth many details of our Lord's life, death, resurrection, second coming and reign.

Thus, nearly all of the Old Testament's striking characters unmistakably foreshadow Christ. The things that happened unto them were types unto us, and are written for our admonition upon whom the end of the ages are come.

The types of this present lesson may be summed up as follows: Abraham, was the type of the Father; Isaac, the type of the Son; Eliezer, the type of the Holy Spirit; and Rebekah, the type of the Church.

ABRAHAM'S DESIRE

"Take a wife unto my son" (*Gen. 24:4*).

Abraham sought a wife for Isaac. This is just what God the Father is now doing for Christ Jesus.

This purpose of God is first revealed in the 2d chapter of Genesis. God put a deep sleep upon Adam, and then He took from his side a rib, and closed up the flesh instead thereof. Then, with "the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made He a woman and brought her unto the man."

In like manner is God now taking from the side of Christ a Bride, and that Bride shall yet be presented unto Him, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.

The 45th Psalm presents the picture of Christ, returning from the marriage. He comes forth from the "ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad." He comes with all of His garments smelling of "myrrh, and aloes and cassia." He comes with His Queen, standing at His right hand, "clad in the gold of Ophir."

The 25th of Matthew presents the picture of Christ coming as a Bridegroom, and "they that are ready," go in with Him to the marriage.

The 19th of Revelation announces that the marriage of the Lamb has come and "His Wife hath made herself ready." To the Wife it is granted that "she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints."

Solomon's Song presents to us a picture of Christ

and His Bride. His love for her and her love for Him is beautifully described.

Thus, the purpose of God in getting a Bride for Christ is set forth in many Scriptures.

Husbands are told to love their wives even as Christ loved the Church. Thus even as a man leaves his father and mother, and is joined to his wife, and they become one flesh, so also are we "members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones." "This is a great mystery, but I speak of Christ and the Church."

THE ELDEST SERVANT

"And Abraham said unto the eldest servant of his house, that ruled over all that he had, Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh: and I will make thee swear by the Lord, the God of Heaven, and the God of earth, that * * thou shalt go unto my country and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac" (*Gen. 24:2-4*).

The eldest servant, Eliezer, who was steward over all of Abraham's goods, is a type of the Holy Spirit.

This is the age of the Holy Spirit. He is the third Person of the Trinity. He is here to have charge over all things. He indwells the saint; He fills the yielded life with His hallowed presence. He convicts the sinner, in fact He is wholly in charge of the "goods of the Father;" He rules over all that the Father hath.

There is, however, one chief mission of the Holy Spirit in this age, and that is, the calling out of a Bride for Christ.

The Spirit is calling to one and to all to come. The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a certain king,

which made a marriage for his son, and sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the marriage.

The servants work together with the Holy Spirit in this call. We are His mouthpiece. It is "the Holy Ghost and us."

It is passing beautiful to note the tact, the perseverance and the positive assurance of Eliezer as he presses his quest for Isaac's bride. The Holy Spirit too, presents His claim in the most convincing way. He tells of the glory of our "Isaac" and "Abraham." He magnifies Christ.

Rebekah received kindly the eldest servant of Abraham; let the sinner open his heart to the Holy Spirit, the One sent from God.

Rebekah took down her water pot, and gave Eliezer to drink; she also gave his camels to drink, and then, she took him to her house and presented him to her mother and brother. Let the man of this world rejoice in the fact that the Spirit of God has come to his door. Let Him in, receive Him with joy, and yield Him the homage that His grace and glory demands.

God pity the one who resists the Spirit of grace, and who does despite to His holy name. Let him that hath an ear hear the Spirit plead, let him follow the Spirit's voice, and gladly go with Him to the marriage of the Lamb.

THE GRACIOUS RESPONSE

"Behold, Rebekah is before thee, take her, and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the Lord hath spoken.

"And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go" (*Gen. 24:51, 58*).

The final decision must come to each individual. The Holy Spirit comes and presents His plea. He tells you of the wonderful glories of Christ. He presents an invitation to the marriage. But the Holy Spirit never forces the issue. Each one must make the final choice.

Rebekah did not hesitate. She said immediately: "I will go." Why do any hesitate? why delay? why refuse? Yet it is so that thousands to-day are turning down the call of the Spirit.

When the invitation went out for the marriage of the king's son, when those who were bidden were told: "Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready; come to the marriage;" then those who were invited "made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise: and the remnant took his servants and entreated them spitefully, and slew them."

Not so with Rebekah. She quickly and quietly said: "I will go." She did not plead for delay; she did not procrastinate.

No wonder Eliezer rejoiced and "worshipped the Lord, bowing himself to the earth." Then he brought forth jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment, and gave them to Rebekah."

In connection with Rebekah's own prompt decision and response, there was a very happy occurrence. Both her mother and her brother exclaimed "Take her, and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the Lord hath spoken." It is not always so. Oftentimes the very members of the family are the ones who hinder the wooings of the Spirit, and

the very ones who stand in the way of some loved one's acceptance of the Gospel.

THE LONG JOURNEY BEGUN

"And Rebekah arose, and her damsels, and they rode upon the camels, and followed the man" (*Gen. 24:61*).

When the decision was made there was a delay suggested by the brother and the mother of Rebekah. They said: "Let the damsel abide with us a few days, at least ten; after that she shall go." Immediately Eliezer answered them, "Hinder me not, seeing the Lord hath prospered my way; send me away that I may go to my master."

When a soul has decided for Christ, there should be no delay in making immediate journey in the new way. The Lord said, "If any one will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.

When the Lord says, "Follow thou Me," it is not for us to respond: "Suffer me first to go and bury my father," or, "Let me first go and bid them farewell, which are at my home," for "no man putting his hand to the plow and looking back is fit for the Kingdom of God."

Rebekah was ready, and immediately she set out on her long desert journey. We too are crossing the sands, we are journeying over the deserts of separation.

"Here in this body pent,
Absent from Him we roam,
Yet daily pitch our moving tent,
A day's march nearer home."

Let us start toward the Heavenly city to-day. Let us begin our journey toward the day of holy nuptials, the hour of our marriage to the King's Son.

THE ELDEST SERVANT CONDUCTING

"And the servant took Rebekah, and went his way" (*Gen. 24:61*).

Those were blessed days to Rebekah. 'To be sure there were hot suns, and the trials of the way; but what cared the beautiful virgin for the discomforts of her journey? Close by her side rode the servant, Eliezer, and he was always cheering her heart with his wonderful accounts of the glories of Abraham and Isaac.

They talked of Isaac by day, and by night Rebekah dreamed of Isaac. Was he not her own, her beloved one? Was she not the destined bride of the greatest of the great?

During the days that intervened between the start and the blessed hour when Rebekah saw Isaac in the distance, and "lighted off her camel," what glories she learned about the one whom she was to wed. Eliezer told her of all of Abraham's experiences from the day he had left Haran. Of the long delay of Isaac's birth. The story of Hagar and of Ishmael; the story of Isaac's being almost sacrificed by his father upon Mount Moriah.

Eliezer told Rebekah of how the angels had visited Abraham and of the wonderful prophecies God had vouchsafed in Isaac. How in Isaac all the world was to be blessed.

Eliezer explained to Rebekah the wonderful priv-

ileges of becoming the wife of so marked a son. That she would share with him the joys of his great inheritance and future heritage. Yes, as they journeyed they talked together of Abraham, and they talked of Isaac, and Rebekah forgot the trials by the way. The anticipated glory about to be revealed overweighed, by far, the sufferings by the way.

The analogy is plain, the type is simple, but beautiful. The same One Who came from God to call us, poor lost ones that we were, to accept the Lord Jesus as our all in all; the same One Who gave us promise of our being presented a glorious Bride—the same One has walked beside us in the way. He is called the Comforter, the Paracletos, the One at our side. He is our conductor across the sands; He journeys with us, all the way.

The Holy Spirit talks of Christ. He takes of the things which belong to Him and He shows them unto us. Oh what blessed experiences are ours as He talks to us by the way. How wonderful when He draws up close to our side, and opens up to us some of the things which eye hath not seen, which ear hath not heard, and which have never entered into the heart of man; these are the things He so graciously reveals.

How our hearts have thrilled as this blessed conductor of our march, the Holy Spirit, has shown us things to come. He loves to tell about the day when we shall see the Father and the Son. Of the day of our Lord's return; of how our Lord will descend with a shout; of our meeting in the air; of the reign with Him; of many of the things which lie ahead. And then He tells us that there are the

“exceeding riches of the Father’s grace toward us in Christ Jesus, which He cannot now reveal, but which will be revealed in the ages to come.

And as the Spirit talks of Him, our hearts beat within us by the way, and we count the weariness and the burdens of our earthly journey as nothing worthy to be compared with the coming joys which await us at the end of the way.

THE MEETING

“And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at eventide: and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and, behold, the camels were coming.

“And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she lighted off the camel” (*Gen. 24:63, 64*).

What joy! What a happy meeting! Isaac lifted up his eyes—he was eagerly waiting the day of her coming. Rebekah lifted up her eyes—she eagerly anticipated the day of his coming forth to meet her.

And it is true—the Lord says: “Behold, I come quickly” and we respond, “Even so come, Lord Jesus.” If we are filled with joyous anticipation, so is He. If we are here looking for the day of His return, He is there, at the Father’s right hand, expecting, until the day of His return.

The Second Coming of Christ and the blessed meeting in the air can be no more precious to us than it is to Him. We call it our “blessed hope” and so it is; but it is also His blessed hope. We think of His coming as our entrance upon our inheritance—we are to be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ: He thinks of the riches “of His

inheritance in the saints," and so He too longs for the hour of the meeting in the air.

I am far frae my hame,
An' I'm weary aftenwhiles,
For the langed-for hame-bringin',
An' my Father's welcome smiles;
An' I'll ne'er be fu' content
Until my een do see
The gowden gates o' Heaven,
An' my ain countrie.

Sae little noo I ken
O' yon blessed, bonnie place—
I only ken it's hame,
Whaur we shall see His face;
It wad surely be eneuch
For evermair to be
I' the glory o' His presence
In oor ain countrie.

Like a bairn to its mither,
A wee birdie to its nest,
I wad fain be gangin' noo
Unto my Saviour's breast;
For He gathers in His bosom
Witless, worthless lambs like me,
An' carries them Himsel'
To His ain countrie.

He is faithfu' that hath promised,
An' He'll shurely come again,
He'll keep His tryst wi' me—
At what hour I dinna ken;
But He bids me still to wait,
An' ready aye to be
To gang at ony moment
To my ain countrie.

Sae I'm watchin', aye, an' singin'
O' my hame as I wait
For the soun'in' o' His futfa'
This side the gowden gate;

God gie His grace to ilka ane
Wha listens noo to me,
That we a' may gang in gladness
To oor ain countrie.

THE MARRIAGE

"And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her" (Gen. 24:67).

This was the high consummation of Rebekah's hope. This was the supreme joy of Isaac's heart. Married!

That the Bible used such a holy ordinance, such a blessed tie, as a type of the union, endeared and indissoluble that is to exist between Christ and His Church, is most blessed.

We have already seen how God proposed to consummate this union; how the marriage of the Lamb is heralded in the Scriptures as a wondrous day; how Christ is to come forth to reign with His Queen at His right hand. What we have now to consider, is only the consummation of the marriage. It will be a joyous day.

There will be the marriage and the marriage supper. There will be the Bride and the Bride's attendants."

"And a voice came out from the throne, saying, Praise our God all ye His servants, ye that fear Him, both small and great."

"And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia! for the Lord God, the Almighty, hath become King!

"Let us be glad and rejoice and give honor to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His Wife hath made herself ready.

"And to her it was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, shining, pure: for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints.

"And he said unto me, Write, Blessed are they that are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.

"And He said unto me, These are the true sayings of God."

Oh Bride of the Lamb, lift up thy head,
For the Bridegroom draweth near,
To call out His saints from among the dead,
To dispel all doubt and fear.
Translation awaits thee, O lovely Bride,
Up in the air to sit by His side,
His voice thou soon shalt hear.

Oh Bride of the Lamb, sing aloud and rejoice,
For the marriage feast is at hand;
Put on thy robes and list to His voice
As it peals from that Heavenly Land,
'Behold I come quickly, with My reward,
Proclaimed by Prophet and ancient bard,
To reign a thousand years.'

MOSES, OR THE LIFE OF FAITH

MOSES, OR THE LIFE OF FAITH

Moses Refused (*Heb. 11:24*).

Moses Chose (*Heb. 11:25*).

Moses Esteemed (*Heb. 11:26, f. c.*).

Moses Looked Away (*Heb. 11:26, l. c.*).

Moses Forsook (*Heb. 11:27, f. c.*).

Moses Endured (*Heb. 11:27, l. c.*).

Moses' Last Words (*Deut. 30:19*).

MOSES REFUSED

"By faith Moses, when he had come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter" (*Heb. 11:24*).

The story of Moses' hiding by his parents in the bulrushes is very familiar. How he was discovered by the daughter of Pharaoh and taken to the palace; how his own mother was chosen to nurse the child; how he was reared in the luxury of the king's home, educated according to the best method of his day; how he became very prominent both in his wisdom and in his leadership of the armies of Egypt.

There came a day, however, when Moses stood at the parting of the ways. He knew that he was, in reality, a son of Israel and the groanings of his people weighed heavily upon his heart. Could he go on as the acknowledged son of Pharaoh's daughter, living in ease and comfort, and protected from every ill; while his own people were being trodden down under the iron hell of oppression?

The Word of God gives Moses' decision: "He refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter."

It may not always be easy to say "no." And yet

Christ definitely said: "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it." In order to follow Christ fully, one must "Deny himself, and take up his cross," and follow Christ.

Illustration: My mother has often told me how, when I was a little fellow, my father took me in his arms, and walking back and forth over the floor he sang:

"You're starting, my boy, on life's journey
Along the great highway of life,
You'll meet with a thousand temptations,
Each city with evil is rife;
The world is a stage of excitement,
There's danger wherever you go,
But if you are tempted, in weakness,
Have courage my boy to say 'no.'"

We should live with eternal "no" to sin and self and satan, and with one eternal "yes" to God.

Illustration: A college boy was hearing strongly the call of God to leave all and follow the Lord Jesus. A Christian was pressing upon him the need of immediate decision. The young man weighing carefully the tremendous pull that the world had upon him finally turned to the Christian and said, "My dear sir, I'm not man enough."

But Moses was man enough. It was when he had come to years that he said "no" to Egypt, and in more than one sense he was every inch a man.

Illustration: It is said that Bob Taylor, when he was first elected to the legislature of his State, went to Nashville with a large mortgage hanging over the farm where his widowed mother lived. A certain matter was before the legislature and Bob Tay-

lor received a letter enclosing a check for one thousand dollars, with the simple words, "We expect you to vote 'no' to-morrow."

The battle was a hard one. The thousand dollars would go far toward lifting the mortgage; the widowed mother would be relieved—all, for simply voting "no," when, otherwise he would have voted "yes."

Bob Taylor sat in his seat in the legislature; the roll was being called; his decision must soon be made. Finally, his name was called. Bob Taylor tore the letter from his pocket and throwing it and the enclosed check toward the speaker's desk, he cried, "I vote, 'yes.'"

That night, with a sense of duty done and a conscience at ease, he slept in his room at a rather cheap boarding house. Suddenly he was awakened by a big crowd surging the street below his window. They were calling his name. Hurriedly dressing, he stepped forth on the veranda, and the crowd shouted: "Three cheers for the man who wouldn't sell his vote."

May God grant to each young man and woman the power to say "no" to sin, and "yes" to God.

MOSES CHOSE

"Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season" (*Heb. 11:25*).

This verse clearly reveals what Moses had before him. The balances were before him. He carefully weighed his decision. On one side, he placed "affliction with the children of God;" on the other side,

he placed "the pleasures of sin for a season;" then he chose the former.

Let no one imagine that this was an easy matter for Moses, a mere bagatelle. The pleasures of sin were just as sweet in that day as they are in this; if anything, the sufferings would be more severe. Yet, Moses matured, and thoughtful, chose the lonely place of suffering. He took his stand with the children of God.

Illustration: It is said that Lady Ann Erskine was once listening to Roland Hill. By and by the preacher espied her and cried something like this: "I have a bid upon the soul of Lady Ann Erskine. Who bids? Satan bids. What does he offer? He offers wealth, and honor, and glory, and the pleasures of this world, all for a season. Who bids? Christ bids. And what does He offer? Suffering affliction with the children of God, and life for evermore. Which will you take, my Lady?" It is said that immediately, the proud woman of the world walked to the front, and kneeling sought salvation through the Blood of Christ.

How many are there to-day who are halting between two opinions? We are saved by receiving Christ, but there are many things which must be given up to follow Christ; there is also much to be gained.

Illustration: We once heard F. B. Meyer tell of an incident at Keswick. A number of ministers, as they sat together, were discussing what they had given up to follow Christ. Mr. Meyer said, that it came his turn, he rather enlarged upon the price he had paid to go all the way with God. Near to Mr.

Meyer sat an aged minister. When his turn came to speak, he said: "My brethren, I have long since forgotten what it cost me to follow the Lord fully. I am lost in the joy of the riches of His grace. It is not what I gave up, it is what I have received that fills my soul with gladness."

On one occasion Joshua stood before the people and said: "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve; whether the God which your fathers served, that were on the other side of the flood; or, the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house we will serve the Lord."

Each one of you must decide this great question. You must choose between the world and God. "No man can serve two masters."

MOSES ESTEEMED

"Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt" (*Heb. 11:26, f. c.*).

This gives us further light as to why Moses "refused," and as to why he "chose." We begin to understand the reason for his decision. It was the result of an "accounting." Let us try to see what Moses saw; let us endeavor to go back to the days of the Pharaohs, and look at things that Moses must have seen.

1. He saw the "treasures in Egypt." We must not think of Egypt, as it is to-day. No one now, would think of it as a country worth the while. A native prince has not sat upon the Egyptian throne for many centuries. It is an impoverished country, an almost forsaken land.

But Egypt, in the days of Moses, was the granary of the world. It was a land of large cities; cities which surpassed in splendor and wealth the other cities of the world. Egypt was the land of temples, its catacombs and its pyramids were the marvels of the earth. It had tremendous libraries and well-manned schools.

All of this Moses weighed, in his decision. These things were his. He was one of Egypt's greatest men. Skilled in all their wisdom, a leader in her armies, and very near the throne.

2. The reproach of Christ. The children of Israel had come down to Egypt in the days of Joseph, under the invitation of Pharaoh, the king who preceded the Pharaoh whom Moses knew. During the life of the earlier Pharaoh, they had greatly prospered. After Pharaoh's death, however, when the children of Israel began to multiply, and when they were exerting more and more influence among the Egyptians, the new king became alarmed. He was afraid that they would become so strong that they would menace the security of the throne itself.

An era of terrific persecution followed. A persecution that waged hotter and hotter as the days went by.

It was during this persecution that Moses was born. Because of the order that all the male children born to the Israelites, should be killed, when Moses was born he was hid three months of his parents.

When Moses had reached his fortieth year, he saw the reproach of his people and heard their cry. He carefully, counted the cost and fully determined to take his place by their side, seeking to deliver them.

From the palace of the king to the reproaches of Christ was quite a step, and yet he gladly made the sacrifice.

Illustration: The story is told of how Richard Fuller, a brilliant young lawyer, living at Beaufort, South Carolina, dropped into a series of special revival services. As the minister preached upon the Cross, young Fuller was deeply moved. Finally when the invitation was given, Fuller startled the audience by walking to the front and grasping the hand of the preacher and receiving Jesus Christ, as his Saviour.

A few days later the people of Beaufort were more startled than ever. Richard Fuller announced before the whole audience, that he had locked the door of his office and stepped forth forever, determining to give his life to God as a minister of the Gospel.

Senator William C. Preston heard of Fuller's decision and came down to Beaufort to dissuade him. The senator told the young lawyer of the many political plumbs which would surely be his if he stuck to his office and of the promised splendor of his career as a lawyer.

In response Fuller said that he had seen the agonies of the Cross, and had fully realized that he was living for the things that perish. He could not but give himself henceforth to the service of the Lord. Richard Fuller became one of the greatest preachers of his day and his life proved a blessing unto many thousands.

Illustration: Saul of Tarsus was a young man, held in highest esteem among the Pharisees; taught

at the feet of Gamaliel; of the stock of Israel; of the tribe of Benjamin; an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the Law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal persecuting the Church; touching the righteousness, which is in the Law, blameless.

But Saul, when he had come to years, refused all this. He accounted it all but loss for Christ. He cast it forth as garbage.

And what did Paul have in mind when he gave up his wonderful career and the prestige and promise of great earthly glory? He gave it up that he might win Christ, and know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His suffering being made conformable unto His death; that he might attain unto the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus.

Let those who think and who can weigh values, decide for themselves what they will do. What is their accounting? It is God or mammon, which?

MOSES LOOKED

"For he had respect (*Greek*, "was looking") unto the recompense of the reward" (*Heb. 11:26, l. c.*).

Moses "refused" and "chose" and "esteemed" because he was "looking" far ahead. It was not only the suffering that Moses saw, he saw the glory of another day. He looked beyond the earth and its sufferings, into Heaven and its rewards.

Some one might argue that a bird in the hand is worth more than two in the bush, but that depends. If the two in the bush are a certainty, why not let go the one in hand?

Illustration: A little child had put its hand down

into a bottle and was crying because he couldn't get it out. His mother said: "Darling, your fist is all doubled up; open up your fingers and you can take out your hand." "But, mamma," said the little tot, "if I open my fingers, I'll drop my penny."

Who is there who wouldn't drop the treasures of Egypt for the treasures of God?

Is it better to set one's affections upon the things which are beneath the earth or upon the things which are above? Is it better to lay up treasures on earth, or to lay them up in Heaven? Is it better to look at the things which are seen, or at the things which are not seen?

The great need of the day is a vision of the things to come. We need to have before us the realities of the Second Coming of Christ, the certainties of the glories that await us.

Moses saw the recompense of the reward. The Second Coming of Christ brings that reward. "Behold, I come quickly and My reward is with Me to give to every man as his work shall be."

Christ endured the Cross, despising the shame, because of the joy that was set before Him; Moses suffered the reproach of Christ for the joy that was set before him.

The Holy Spirit teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts (that is what Moses did), and to live soberly, righteously and Godly, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing, (that is what Moses did).

Satan would blind our eyes to the Gospel of the glory of Christ. He would hide from us a vision of coming things and disclaim "the recompense of the reward." But let us have enlightened eyes.

MOSES FORSOOK

"By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king" (Heb. 11:27, f. c).

The word "forsook" brings before us the putting into practice of the decision of the mind. Moses "refused" and Moses "chose" and Moses "accounted" and Moses "was looking"—all of this was the action of the mind and of the will; it would have amounted to nothing had he not acted upon his decisions.

Illustration: It is said that, in a certain prayer meeting, some man was speaking something like this: "My brethren, I aim to be a better man; I aim to be more faithful in attendance at the house of God; I aim to give more money to the cause of Christ; I aim, I aim, I aim."—Suddenly, some one in the audience who loved to hunt, cried out excitedly, "Fire, brother, fire."

Moses practiced in his life what he purposed in his heart. Moses forsook Egypt—this is the final test. The prodigal son said in his mind: "I will arise and go to my father." Then he put into practice his promise and "he arose and came to his father." God has called us to a life of separation from the world, we must forsake Egypt, we must go outside the camp and bear His reproach.

Illustration: Never will we forget when Allen Fort, Jr., and T. F. Callaway, the first, a solicitor of his county, and the second, a promising young lawyer, came to us and said, "We want to preach the Gospel." These young men had both passed through the same experience that confronted Moses. Eter-

nity alone can reveal just what it meant to them to take their stand. But they forsook all and followed Christ. To-day one of these men is pastor of the First Baptist Church, in Nashville, Tennessee, and the other is pastor of the Baptist Tabernacle, in Chattanooga.

Who will forsake all and follow Christ? Who will gladly say:

"Take the world but give me Jesus,
That dear Friend Who loves me so:
Gladly, all I leave to follow Jesus,
Through this world below."

MOSES ENDURED

"For he endured, as seeing Him Who is invisible" (*Heb. 11:27, l.c.*).

There never came a time in the life of Moses when he regretted his decision. He made his decision and then pressed on in his way. There came days of trial, when his heart was hard pressed, and when, with plaintive voice, he cried unto God:—"I am not able to bear this people alone;" but he never turned back.

Paul too, said: "Having obtained help of God, I have continued unto this day."

But, there was a special reason for Moses' endurance. He "endured as seeing Him Who is invisible." He had One at his side who gave him grace for every time of need.

There is a special sense in which Christ is with us, to-day. His, "Lo I am with you, even unto the end of the age," is very precious. It is true, too, that the saints of old had visions of Christ.

David said: "I have set the Lord always before my face." Daniel wrote: "The people who do know their God shall be strong and do exploits."

Illustration: A girl of the world, suddenly changed her whole way of living. From a society belle, given wholly to pleasures, she became one of the most faithful followers of Christ. Some thought she must have been disappointed in love; some imagined a great sorrow had come into her life. To those who questioned her, she replied that the reason she had become so changed, was explained by the locket she wore around her neck. After years of true, Christian service, when she was dead, a loved one quietly opened the locket to get the girl's secret. In the locket was found a crumpled piece of paper, and on the paper were printed the words: "Whom having not seen, ye love; in Whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

We, too, should run our race "looking unto Jesus." No wonder Paul wrote: "There stood by me this night, the angel of the Lord, Whose I am and Whom I serve." Only as we walk and as we talk with Jesus Christ will we endure. Peter walked the water while his eyes were on Christ! but Peter began to sink when he looked away and saw "the winds and the waves boisterous." We are not discussing our salvation, but our faithfulness in following Christ—and, to be faithful we must see Him, Who is invisible.

MOSES' LAST WORDS

"I have set before you, life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life" (*Deut. 30:19*).

We have before us a beautiful and a touching scene. The one who had forsaken Egypt and who had chosen to suffer affliction with the people of God, after eighty years of experience, has come at last to the time of his departure. Earnestly does Moses place before Israel the blessings of obedience, and the curses of disobedience; then he called Heaven and earth to witness, that he had put the matter truly before them, and he urged them—"Therefore choose life."

He who had made the choice and endured in his choice had a right to place the choice before others. Let us now urge the choice upon you. Which will you choose?

The things which are seen, or the things which are not seen?

The things of the flesh, or the things of the Spirit?

The things of man, or the things of God?

The things that are beneath, or the things above?

The things that will be shaken, or the things that cannot be shaken?

"Which way shall I take?" said a voice in the night,
I'm a pilgrim, and weary, and dark is the night;
And I look for a city, that lies on the hill,
But before me the night, lieth sullen and chill."

"Near, near thee, my son, is the old wayside Cross,
Like a grey friar cowed, in lichens and moss;
And its cross-beams will point to the bright golden span,
That bridges the waters so safely for man."

In conclusion. Does any one, as they see Moses on the Mount of Transfiguration, imagine that he regretted the step that he took when he forsook Egypt and followed Christ?

It has been three and one-half millenniums since Moses left Egypt. In the light of the ages past, and in the light of the untold ages yet unborn and of Moses' ever-increasing glory—did his decision pay?

SAMSON

SAMSON

Samson Was Called in a Time of Need (*Judg. 13:15*).

Samson Was Especially Prepared for Service (*Judg. 13:7, 24, 25; Heb. 11:32*).

Samson Wrought Great Victories for God (*Judg. 13:5; 14:5, 6; 15:8, 16*).

Samson Loses Out with God (*Judg. 16:1*).

Samson Serves the Philistines (*Judg. 16:21*).

Samson's Strength Is Restored (*Judg. 16:22*).

Samson Wrought a Great Victory (*Judg. 16:30*).

The study of Scriptural biography is both inspiring and illuminating. The things which happened to the saints of old were written for our admonition upon whom the end of the ages is come.

Believers, if they studied carefully and prayerfully, both the failures and the victories of Old Testament saints, would be in little danger of falling by the way.

Satan has but little left to spring upon the children of God, that he has not already sprung, in the days gone by. All we need to do, then, is to acquaint ourselves with his tactics of old, in order that we may fortify ourselves against his renewed onslaughts.

Few Bible characters speak to us more clearly and more positively than Samson speaks. He was specially called of God, separated from his birth, endowed with a marvelous faith, and endued with the power of the Spirit.

Samson made a good beginning, but he soon lost his place. He sold out to the devil. Instead of serving God he became an enforced slave of the

devil. Samson, however, was restored, and, in his dying, he wrought out a victory against the enemy that he had never equaled in his whole previous career.

Let us thank God that His Word unfolds before us Samson's faults and failures as well as Samson's faith. May we profit thereby.

SAMSON WAS CALLED TO SERVE IN A GREAT TIME OF NEED

"For the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb, and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines" (*Judg. 13:5*).

1. Samson found Israel under the iron heel of the Philistines. The children of God had done evil in the sight of the Lord and God had delivered them into the hands of the Philistines for forty years. The time for deliverance was at hand. God was raising up a man for this special hour.

Is it not true that we are living in a time of dire need? Has not higher criticism been sweeping many from the moorings of the faith, once for all delivered to the saints? is it not true that a spirit of worldliness is pressing down upon our churches, and that many of our people are being carried adrift from God? is it not true that a social gospel, which is not the Gospel, is overwhelming the pulpit, and demanding a new method and a new message?

God surely needs prophets now, if He ever needed them; men who will not count their lives as dear; men who will stand at the parting of the ways, and call the church back to Christ.

2. Samson not only found a time of need, but he was particularly called of God to meet that need. God gave to Samson's parents special announcements as to his coming birth.

The angel of the Lord appeared unto Manoah's wife and told her that she should bear a son; the wife told her husband, and then Manoah prayed unto the Lord for instructions as to what should be done unto the child, that should be born.

The wonderful signs that accompanied Samson's birth may not mark our call, but it is true that God still calls men with a special call for service. Samson, and the saints of old, are not the only ones with a before-prepared plan, marked out of God.

In our day, has God not a work, a special work, a God-ordained work for every man? Are we sent out, simply hit or miss, with no before-arranged program?

Impossible. "There was a man sent from God whose name was John" and there are men sent from God to-day, whose names are quite as truly John, or some other name. Paul delighted in the assurance that he was an Apostle, sent of God and called. Certainly there is a great need, certainly we have, if we will only listen, a special call to meet that need.

SAMSON WAS ESPECIALLY PREPARED FOR SERVICE

"And the child shall be a Nazarite to God" (*Judg. 13:7*).

"And the child grew, and the Lord blessed him" (*Judg. 13:24*).

"And the Spirit of the Lord began to move him" (*Judg. 13:25*).

"The faith of * * Samson" (*Heb. 11:32*).

1. Samson was a Nazarite unto God. That is, Samson was separated unto God from his birth. No razor was ever to come upon his head, for his hair should remain the seal of his separation.

Is it not true that each of us is called to separation unto God? Are we not called out of the world? Are we not a special people for God's possession? Are we not to come out from among them, and be separate?

Samson was never more definitely called to separation than are we, he was never more positively called to yield his all unto God than are we. God is continually calling us to present ourselves to Him, and our members as the instruments of righteousness unto Him.

The disciples were told to tell the man who owned the ass, upon which Christ was to ride into Jerusalem, "The Master hath need of him." Surely the Master, then, hath need of us. Who is there this day willing to hear His call and present himself as a living sacrifice unto Christ Jesus?

2. Samson grew up as a child and was blessed of the Lord. We who are called into His service may sometimes doubt our special blessings and preparations for the work of the Lord. But, if we will stop and look back, we will soon recognize what marvelous things the Lord has done for us, in order that we might be prepared unto every good work.

We have had the Holy Spirit especially sent from God to instruct us in the things of Christ. We have had the church with its ministry and the Word of God with its revelations of Christ. How wonderfully God has panoplied us for His work! From our

infancy we have had every possible opportunity to be made meet for service.

3. Samson was moved by the Spirit of God. In those days this blessing was not granted unto all. The Holy Spirit was sent to special men, for special work. To-day it is different. God's Spirit is here to endue all of us with power for service.

When the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon Samson, then he could break every band with which the Philistines might seek to bind him; then he could take the jaw-bone of an ass and slay a thousand men therewith.

When the Holy Spirit rests upon us, then we shall have power, and we shall be witnesses unto Him.

Men of the world know how to take hold of God's power in the wind to run their ships; they know how to take hold of God's power in the subtle electric current, to lighten their houses and to run their electric cars; they know how to take hold of God's power in the water falls to generate tremendous force, and to conduct their mills.

Why should the children of light, then, who are in the Lord's business, seek to run their affairs in the power of the flesh? Why do we not know how to take hold of God's power in the Holy Spirit?

Perhaps we would make it clearer, if we put it this way. Why are we refusing to connect with the dynamo of Heaven, not that we use God's power to do our work, but that He might clothe us with power to do His work?

4. Samson was a man of faith? He believed God.

During the twenty years in the which he ruled Israel, many things must have occurred that led the Holy Spirit to enroll Samson's name among the heroes of faith.

Stephen was a man full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. We cannot meet the hour of the church's need, unless we have positive faith in God. Our successes in His service will be "according" to our faith. Faith holds a far more important place in the annals of the church's achievements, than many of us are willing to admit.

Stop and consider what faith has wrought and you will begin to realize the omnipotence of faith's achievements.

SAMSON WROUGHT SOME GREAT VICTORIES FOR GOD

He shall begin to deliver Israel" (*Judg. 13:5*).

"A young lion roared against him * * and he rent him as he would have rent a kid" (*Judg. 14:5, 6*).

"And he smote them hip and thigh with a great slaughter" (*Judg. 15:8*).

"Heaps upon heaps, with the jaw bone of an ass have I slain a thousand men" (*Judg. 15:16*).

1. Samson did some great feats, and in these feats he began to deliver Israel. We only regret that he "began," and never did complete the task. He might have done far better, but no one can doubt but that he did well, in many things, and, that he possessed a fearlessness that should mark every servant of the Lord.

Many saints have done great works for God. Time would fail us to relate the mighty acts of men who were filled with the Spirit. Eternity alone will

reveal the triumphs of the faith. Think of Paul going into a city and being reputed by the citizens, as one who had "turned the world upside down."

Do mighty works follow us, demonstrating that we, too, are filled with God? Can the things God is working through us be called, "the works of God"? Christ said: "Greater works than these, shall ye do." Have we, clothed with the Holy Spirit of God, fulfilled the possibilities of our discipleship?

2. Samson did his great feats in no strength of his own. The Philistines marveled at his power and at his prowess. There were no outward signs that marked him as a man of sufficient strength to carry off the gates of a city; or, single handed, to slay a thousand men. Samson was not a giant. He did not possess any great strength, within himself alone.

His strength lay in his God, and the secret of his strength lay in the long hair, that marked his Nazarene vow of separation unto the Lord.

What we need to-day, is a power that is Divine. We are sent to work a work that will startle men, and cause them to wonder; a work that cannot be accounted for, upon any human basis.

It is almost amusing to hear men discuss the secret of the strength of Spurgeon, or, of Moody, or, of some other greatly used child of God. How few really know that the power is not in the men, at all. "Power belongeth unto God."

3. Some have thought that Samson's slaying the lion is a type of the saints' victory over the devil; and that Samson's slaying the Philistines, is a type

of the saints' victory over the world. Perhaps this is true, perhaps it is not. But it is true that God does give power over the devil and over the world, to all who look to Him.

God has placed in our hands the shield of faith, whereby we can quench every fiery dart of the devil; and "this is that which overcometh the world, even our faith." Victory is assured. We are led in the train of His triumphs; we are more than conquerors through Him Who loved us.

SAMSON LOSES OUT WITH GOD

"Then went Samson to Gaza" (Judg. 16:1).

There are several distinct steps in Samson's downfall, and these steps covered quite a period of time. We do not stumble and fall, all in one moment. The backslider slowly, and often imperceptibly, wanders away from God. Let us mark some of Samson's downward steps.

1. Samson went to Gaza. This was the enemies' country. We do not read that the Lord sent him down that way. He did not go to bear witness for his God; he went to satisfy his own desires.

Think of it! A man separated unto God, going to Gaza! Yet, that is just what we see around us every day. Christians are called saints. Christians are a people separated and consecrated unto God, then why are so many running with the world? Should Christians like the onions and the garlic and the melons of Egypt? Should Christians loathe the delicacies of Canaan's land?

— Something must be wrong, somewhere. Per-

haps the great majority of these people, going down to Gaza, are not saved. If they are saved they will learn to regret the day of their drifting. Those who go to Gaza will feel the rebuke of their Lord; they will suffer keenly, for every moment they spend away from the Father's domains.)

2. Samson saw there an harlot. He laid his head in her lap.

This harlot, Delilah, was a child of Belial. She lured Samson deeper and deeper into her clutches, until he at last gave up his secret concerning the source of his power. With the shearing of Samson's head he broke his Nazarite vow, which he had kept from a babe, and cut his fellowship with God.)

7 When believers go down into the world and play with sin's pleasures they are sure to lose their place of power. All the power we have is wholly dependent upon our connection with the risen Christ, through the Holy Spirit.) When we break connections, the power is gone. We may shake ourselves and try to testify as in the days of old, but our testimony will be powerless and lifeless.)

3. Samson failed sadly in this, also, that he sought to use his God-given power to satisfy his own selfish desires. It was not always in Israel's behalf, nor in behalf of God's glory, that Samson used his strength. [He seemed to think that his power was given him to foster his own selfish whims and schemes.]

7 Simon Magus sinned after this sort. He wanted the Holy Ghost in order that he might use the Holy Ghost; not in order that he might be used by Him. Let us walk carefully, lest we fall after the

same example of unbelief. We greatly sin, if we want our services to be blessed of God, in order that we may be reckoned by the church or by the world as some great one.

4. One other thing might be mentioned. We fear that Samson lost out, by yielding himself over to foolish jesting. A funny story may have its place, and a trick or two, may be permissible, but one is on dangerous ground when they allow jokes and tricks to become a part of their make-up.

Even ministers sometimes are known more for their jestings than for their piety. Things ought not so to be. Our conversation should always be seasoned with salt. As for filthy communications, such things are an abomination before God, and should forever be put away from us.

SAMSON SERVES THE PHILISTINES

"And the Philistines took him, and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he did grind in the prison house" (*Judg. 16:21*).

We now behold the man who once had possessed power, a castaway, shaved and shorn and serving the Philistines.

What a sad reproach was this! The name of God was daily blasphemed by the fall of Samson. There are three words that some one has used to describe Samson just here.

1. **Blinding.** The Philistines took him and put out his eyes. This blinding of Samson may suggest several things.

(1) First of all, many saints seem utterly blinded

to the fact that they are backsliders. They wander about the enemy's land, but they know not that they are there. They imagine that they are doing fairly well in their daily walk, but alas they are drifting away from God.

(2) Secondly, many saints seem altogether oblivious to the better things of God. They are blinded to the value of the Canaan sweets. They know nothing of the joy that comes to those who walk close to the Master; they are ignorant of the pleasures that are at His right hand.

(3) Thirdly, the God of this age has blinded many saints to the Gospel of the glory of Christ. They cannot see afar off. The eternal glories of the "blessed hope" are nothing to them. They are so engrossed in the things down here, that they never think of how they should live; looking for the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

2. Binding. The Philistines took Samson and bound him with fetters. How little does satan care for us when he has us under his power. It is the live, witnessing saints that make satan to tremble.

In the parable of the sower, the seed among the thorns is choked. Satan is ever seeking to choke out our testimony. The deceitfulness of riches and the pleasures of this world are his favorite fetters.

Beware, child of God, when you are caught fast in satan's snares. Never rest if you have lost the place of testimony, until God restores you to His grace. To Lazarus, raised from the dead, Christ said, "Loose him, and let him go."

3. Grinding. Samson was made to grind in the

prison house. He who once wrought for God is now serving the enemy. What a call does Romans 6, present us! "Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin."

We greatly fear that many saints are still grinding out the corn of the Philistines. Who is it that helps the devil to run his movies? Who helps to pay for the many things that curse the land? Who, for policy's sake has not helped on some humanly good work, fostered by satan, which was at heart, antagonistic to real salvation?

We surely should not ask men of the world to help the Lord run His work; neither, should we, who are the Lord's, help the devil to run his work. Let us not grind the devil's corn.

SAMSON'S STRENGTH RESTORED

"Howbeit the hair of his head began to grow again after he was shaven" (*Judg. 16:22*).

1. Our first thought is a solemn one. Stop and think of the many days that must have elapsed between the time that Samson lost his power, and the time that his power was restored. What darkened days and months of sorrow and of heartache! Know, therefore, that it is an "evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God." One never wanders from God, but that he pays the price, in bitter tears.

2. Next let us think of Samson coming back to God. His hair began to grow, and so did his grip on God begin to grow. He was daily learning that the world was vanity, and that its seeming glories were no more than the mirage of the deserts.

We praise God that there is a possibility of the wanderer coming back to God. Ephraim may return, but Ephraim must take with her words, and say, "Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously; so will we render unto Thee instead of bullocks, the calves of our lips."

When a prayer like this is made, then the Lord will heal their backslidings, and love them freely.

3. Let us mark the prayer of Samson: "And Samson called unto the Lord, and said, O Lord God, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray Thee, only this once, O God."

David too, made his prayer unto God, and confessed his sin. And the Lord heard him, and forgave him. David then laid himself down and slept; he awoke and the Lord sustained him.

SAMSON WROUGHT A GREAT VICTORY

"And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines. And he bowed himself with all his might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein. So the dead that he slew in his death were more than all they that he slew in his life" (*Judg. 16:30*).

The Philistines little dreamed that with Samson's growing hair, his power was also returning. They saw in Samson only the blinded slave that was a trophy of their own cunning.

The day had arrived for a great sacrifice unto Dagon, their god. They said in their hearts, that Dagon had delivered Samson into their hands, and thus they thought, that by bringing Samson to their festivities, they would do honor to their god, and debase Samson and his God.

With merry hearts they called for Samson to make them sport. Then did Samson cry to God and the Lord heard him. He felt for the pillars, upon which the house rested, and with one last call upon God, he bowed himself in all his might, and yielded up his life that God might be avenged concerning all that the Philistines had done against God's servant and against His own holy name.

Let no one think that because they have wandered from God that they can never therefore be forgiven and never be restored to the place of power. Peter had sinned, and Peter was forgiven; and Peter was, after his fall, a much more valiant preacher than he ever was before.

Bless God, that there is such a thing as getting back into fellowship, and such a thing as getting back into service.

THE YOUNG MAN ABSALOM

THE YOUNG MAN ABSALOM

His Home Life (*II Sam. 3:2, 3*).

His Environment (*II Sam. 15:1*).

His Personal Accomplishments (*II Sam. 14:25*).

His Unholy Ambitions (*II Sam. 15:4*).

His Deceitful Measures (*II Sam. 15:7-10*).

His Premature Death (*II Sam. 18:24*).

His Broken-hearted Father (*II Sam. 18:33*).

The story of Absalom is one full of lessons which are greatly needed by many a youth; lessons which stir and grip the soul.

David's first query, when the runners had returned with news from the battle (*see II Sam. 18:32*), was, "Is the young man Absalom safe?"

1. A young man's safety depends on his home surroundings, on his father, his mother, and also his sisters. The need of the family altar is paramount.

2. A young man's safety depends on his environment. He needs not only a true home influence, but he needs to be shielded from pampered wealth and luxuriating ease.

3. A young man's safety depends upon his associates. God teaches us to shun evil companions. When this is not done, the evil invariably corrupts the good. "Evil communications corrupt good manners;" not good manners correct evil communications.

4. A young man's safety depends on his ideals. Absalom was inordinately ambitious; he was unchaste in thought and mind; he was deceitful and

treacherous in his dealings. He sought the things that accrued to his own selfish desires, even at the sacrifice of every principle of honor and justice.

5. A young man is wholly unsafe when he turns his back upon his father and his father's God. Absalom trod under foot every sacred tie; he counted a father's affection unworthy of notice. He turned traitor to those of his own blood. He mocked sin, dragged sin with a cart rope; he mocked God, lifted himself above every call to righteousness and above the God Who called him to righteousness.

6. A young man who sows to the flesh must reap as he sowed. Absalom was dead in battle. In the boughs of the oak, hung the one who had dreamed of dominion and sought power. In the boughs of an oak hung the one beautiful in person, the most admired in all Israel. His pride was his downfall. He died as he lived, in rebellion against both his father and his God.

7. A young man's broken-hearted father. David wept as he saw the son of his own flesh brought low. He mourned for him, because he loved him. Absalom had not only wrecked his own life, but he had broken his father's heart.

HIS HOME LIFE

"Unto David were sons born in Hebron: * * the third, Absalom, the son of Maacah the daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur" (*II Sam. 3:2, 3*).

No one need doubt that the home life means everything in forming the character of the child. God's Word says, "Bring up a child in the way that he

should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

1. Absalom had a father, who was truly God's man, and yet David must have been so greatly occupied with the affairs of the kingdom that oft-times the needed counsel was lacking.

Solomon does speak touchingly of the training he received from his father. He said: "He taught me also, Let thine heart retain my words: keep my commandments and live."

Whether Absalom had this same training we do not know, but we fear he had not. There is a supreme duty which falls to the father. It is to him God speaks, when He says: "These words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children, and thou shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house."

2. Absalom had a mother, who was daughter of Talmai, the king of Geshur. His mother may have been very accomplished, being a daughter of royalty, but she was also a heathen and little prepared to give Absalom that training he so much needed, especially in things spiritual.

How glad satan is to divide the home. If he can have either the father or the mother on his side, he will be able to go a long way toward neutralizing the teaching of the parent who may know God.

It was to Moses that Pharaoh said: "Go now ye that are men, only let your wives and your children be stayed."

Satan knows that a house divided against itself cannot stand and that if he can get an entering

wedge he will soon be able to do much toward the wreckage of the home.

Illustration: A wicked mother is a great bane in a home. It is said that when Charles IX. of France was a youth, his mother instilled into his very soul a deadly hatred for the Huguenots. No wonder then that when the same Charles was dying, he is reputed to have sweat blood from his forehead as he cried, concerning his butchery: "I see the mangled bodies of the Huguenots, they drip with blood, would to God that I had at least spared the infants at their mother's breasts."

May parents give to the children of their homes, a home life that will yield the rich perfume of a holy life. An environment conducive to Godliness.

HIS IMMEDIATE ENVIRONMENT

"Absalom prepared him chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him" (II Sam. 15:1).

1. It is easy to grasp the meaning of our key verse. Absalom was reared in the midst of palatial glories. His father David had quite a different early training—David had been a shepherd lad, tending the sheep of his father Jesse.

The children of luxuriant wealth are too often wholly unprepared for the hard battles of life. They give themselves over to living deliciously; they pamper their hearts in a day of slaughter.

Poverty and toil helps to put iron into the blood; ease and lounging helps to make vitiate every fiber of the being.

Absalom was a sport. He prepared him chariots and fifty men to run before him. He utilized the position and wealth of his father to feed his lustings for self-glory.

Absalom failed utterly to surmount the natural tendencies of his environment. He rather allowed his environment to sweep him along, step by step, in its rushing, until he had lost all sense of sobriety and righteousness.

2. Special notice should be given to the associates of this young man, Absalom. He had fifty men to run before him. These and others had great influence in forming Absalom's character.

Every youth needs to carefully guard his associates. Some Scriptures just here, are well worth considering:

Prov. 1:10: "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not."

Prov. 4:14, 15: "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men."

Ps. 1:1, 2: "Blessed is the man who walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful."

Eph. 5:11: "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness."

"Shun evil companions,
Bad language disdain,
God's name hold in reverence
Nor take it in vain."

HIS PERSONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

"Now in all Israel there was none to be so much praised as Absalom for his beauty: from the sole of his foot even to the crown of his head, there was no blemish in him" (II Sam. 14:25).

Absalom was possessed of a rare beauty of person. When he shaved his head, as was his custom at every year's end, he weighed his hair at two hundred shekels, after the king's weight. (Something like eight pounds, English troy weight.)

Beauty, long hair and an overdose of praise is enough to spoil any one who is not rooted deep in God.

Absalom soon became "foolish, disobedient, deceived, enslaved by divers lusts" (*Titus 3:3*).

The pleasures of this life were thorns that sprang up and choked his holier aspirations.

Absalom was caught in the net of the world's vanities. Had he been wise he would gladly have yielded every vestige of his earthly glory and have counted it but dung, that he might have followed the Lord fully.

"Is your soul in touch with Jesus?
Is He truly all in all?
Are you joyful in His presence,
And responsive to His call?"

"Keep your mind in touch with Jesus,
Keep Him with you everywhere;
Keep your soul in touch with Jesus,
By the power of love and prayer."

If you live for this world and sow to the flesh you will certainly reap what you sow.

Illustration: "An Eastern fable tells how a master said to his slave, 'Go into such a field and sow barley.' Lukman sowed oats instead. At the time of harvest his master went to the place, and seeing the green oats springing up asked him, 'Did I not tell you to sow barley here? Why, then, have you sown oats?' He answered, 'I sowed oats in the hope that barley would grow.' His master said, 'What foolish idea is this? Have you ever heard of the like?' Lukman replied, 'You are constantly sowing in the field of the world the seeds of evil, and yet expect to reap in the resurrection the fruits of virtue!' The master, abashed, set the slave free."

HIS UNHOLY AMBITIONS

"And Absalom said moreover, Oh that I were made judge in the land" (II Sam. 15:4).

Absalom had what some might call a high ambition—he wanted to be king. He was not satisfied with chariots and horsemen; with beauty and praise: he wanted to have power and kingship.

This might at first seem praiseworthy—but it was wholly selfish and condemnatory. Absalom sought the kingdom only to serve his own selfish vanity and to further his own personal ambitions.

Poor Absalom, he was so greatly praised that he soon began to imagine himself the very one before whom all should bow, and to whom all should do obeisance.

Surely pride cometh before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall.

Here is a lesson that we all need to consider fully. God says, "Thou shalt not covet," but Absalom cov-

eted his own father's throne. God says "Seekest thou great things for thyself, seek them not," but Absalom sought his own and not another's wealth.

Illustration: How different is the story of John Foster. John Foster was foreman of the decorators in a large pottery factory when a terrible temptation came to him.

"One day while engaged in his work, the president, who always prepared his recipes in a little private office, was suddenly called down-stairs, and thoughtlessly left his recipe book lying open on the desk. Foreman Foster had to go into the room for some colors, when—judge his surprise—right before him, lying open on the table, was the president's book in which were all his valuable recipes. Then came the temptation of John Foster. Here was a small book containing a few secrets that were of immense value. He could quickly copy them and not be found out. There were plenty of men that would gladly avail themselves of an opportunity of going into business with him, if he could produce a china body equal to that made at this celebrated pottery,—for it was acknowledged to be the best in the country. What a struggle went on within him as he stood there looking at the open book! He could be rich, he could travel,—a thing he yearned to do; he could educate his children and care for his old mother; yes, and he would not have to work ten hours a day in the hot shop. What an easy way to make a fortune! He became greatly agitated for a terrific battle was raging within. Finally he grasped the book, closed it and held it up in the air, and exclaimed, 'Victory through

Christ.' He then sought the president and handed him the little book which he thought he had locked up in his desk. John Foster is still a humble decorator and an overcomer through Christ."

What we need is the courage of John Foster, and not the weakness of Absalom who was swept from his moorings by an unholy ambition.

HIS DECEITFUL MEASURES

"And it came to pass after forty years, that Absalom said unto the king, Let me go, I pray thee, and pay my vow which I vowed unto the Lord in Hebron.

"But Absalom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, As soon as ye hear the sound of the trumpet, then ye shall say, Absalom reigneth in Hebron" (*II Sam. 15:7, 10*).

Such measures seem impossible to one who has left within him any vestige of honor. Absalom was doubly false. False to his father and false to his God. Under the guise of Divine obedience, he deceived and planned to destroy his own father.

Hypocrisy is always despicable, but when one uses a religious garb to cover up some dastardly planned trick, it is unspeakable.

Judas under cover of a kiss, betrayed his Lord; Absalom under cover of paying a vow, committed high-handed treason.

1. Beware of hypocrisy. All saints who sin are not hypocrites. A hypocrite is one who robs widow's houses, and then, for a pretense, makes a long prayer.

Hypocrites may pay tithes, and count their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, and encompass sea and land to make a proselyte:

while, all the time, within their heart they are full of unclean things. Without they are like whited sepulchers, within they are like dead men's bones.

2. Beware of tramping under foot a father's love.

Illustration: We once saw a young man coming in from an all-night debauch. He soon was standing over the dying form of his mother. We heard her say, "Son, I am dying and you have killed me." Two days later at the funeral, we knew that the handsome, but dissolute lad of eighteen who sat weeping by the coffin, as we spoke, was indeed guilty of his mother's death.

Many a boy and many a girl have hurried their loved parents to their graves by their Godless deeds.

3. There is however, Another's love—Our Lord "commendeth His love toward us." He died for us. Yet how many are tramping His love under foot, spurning grace, despiting the Spirit, madly the Christ-rejecter rushes on toward his doom.

HIS PREMATURE DEATH

"And he (Joab) took three darts in his hand, and thrust them through the heart of Absalom, while he was yet alive in the midst of the oak" (II Sam. 18:14).

Some one asked another, "Where is hell?" The reply was "It is at the end of a mis-spent life."

As we see Absalom hanging by his hair in the oak, we know that the wages of sin is death, in a very real sense. A death physical? Yes, for Absalom was that day slain. A death forever? Yes. For sin brings eternal separation from Christ, in Whom alone is life.

It does seem that Absalom proved the truth of Psalm 55:23, "Bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days."

Sin spoils everything it touches. Sin is death to everything that it grips. Death to health, death to prospects, death to joy, death to hope and death forevermore.

Illustration: "A young man in Worcester, Mass., ran away with the funds of a savings bank. He fled to Paris, but returned to New York and was captured. To the officer he said: 'I am happier to-day in this car, headed for certain punishment, than I have been since the train left the depot on Wednesday night, five months ago. Time has dragged fearfully, and the thousand and one pleasures which money can buy have weighed as nothing in the balance when compared to the awful suffering induced by giving play to my thoughts and going back over the whole time of this affair. Each successive violation of right added little by little to the result, till, to my over-strained nerves, it was as if I were carrying the whole weight.'"

Poor Byron died when he had but reached his prime. He had, like Absalom, drunk cups of pleasure, which thousands might have drunk, and then died wanting more to drink. Byron expressed his own distress at his life of sin, and his unmeasured anguish in the words:

"My days are in the yellow leaf,
The fruits and flowers of life are gone;
The worm, the canker and the grief
Are mine alone."

Illustration: H. W. Pope of Chicago, tells thus

the story of the life and death of the valedictorian of his class. "He had no religious principles. When others drank, he was not strong enough to refuse. After graduation he studied law. He became one of the most brilliant and promising lawyers of his state. Temptations grew stronger and more frequent, and having no acquaintance with Him Who is able to save to the uttermost, and able to keep from falling, he soon lost his standing and business and died a common drunkard."

HIS BROKEN-HEARTED FATHER

"And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said: O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!" (II Sam. 18: 33).

No matter how sinful Absalom had been, David loved him. David loved him unto death. He felt keenly every step of Absalom's downfall. Perhaps, he felt that he was, in part, to blame for his son's sins.

The people blamed David for weeping over Absalom's untimely death. They saw in Absalom a traitor, and such he was. David knew this,—and yet, Absalom was David's son, as well as the one who had sought to take David's kingdom.

Illustration: The story is told of a father who had a wicked son. "The old man had often prayed and wrestled with God on his behalf. But he became worse and worse. Never did the father close his doors against him. One day one of the father's neighbors addressed him with considerable severity, saying, 'Why harbor that reprobate son of yours?'"

Why don't you turn him out of doors and banish him from your house?" 'Ay, ay,' said the aged saint, his grey locks trembling with emotion, 'you can all turn him out of doors but his own father.'"

David's armies were victorious, the kingdom was saved, and yet David mourned.

Illustration: A story is told that may help us to understand the heart of David in this sad hour.

"A general whose troops won the battle in a hotly contested conflict was called after the victory that the praise and reward worthily his might be given. But he could not be found. After a long search his staff officers finally located the general in his tent, with his arms folded in utter dejection. The officers congratulated him upon the brilliant work done under his leadership, adding: 'The commanding general wants to see you at once. He is waiting to give you your brevet and promotion. We are all proud of you to-day.'

"'Oh, no,' said the poor general, 'don't congratulate me. I can't bear it. Tell the commanding general that I cannot come. Tell him that I care nothing for promotion.'

"The officers replied: 'You should know we cannot go back with any such answer. You are all right. You haven't even a scratch or a wound.'

"Then came the agonized reply: 'Oh, I am wounded. I am mortally wounded. I am shot through the heart.' Then he walked over to a corner of the tent, turned back a blanket and exposed the body of his only son, who rode with him through the battle and had been shot through the heart. For that father the shouts of victory seemed like mockery. His

poor heart was broken and crushed in the death of his precious son."

Let those who sin stop and consider, not alone the end of sin, as far as it touches themselves, but the woes their sinning brings upon others.

No one can live to himself. If he will, he can gladden the hearts of his parents; or if he will, he can sadden and break them.

Illustration: I saw a mother weeping over her son as he died without Christ. She pled with me not to let him die, because he was not prepared to die. How she wept, and prayed and yet the young man died unconscious of the agony he had brought to his dearest friend.

MEPHIBOSHETH



MEPHIBOSHETH

Grace Longing (*II Sam. 9:1*).

Grace Unfolding (*II Sam. 9:1*).

Grace Explaining (*II Sam. 9:1*).

Grace Designating (*II Sam. 9:3, 4*).

Grace Fetching (*II Sam. 9:5*).

Grace Bestowing (*II Sam. 9:6, 7*).

Grace Praised (*II Sam. 19:27*).

GRACE LONGING

"And David said: Is there yet any left of the house of Saul, that I may shew the kindness of God unto him?" (*II Sam. 9:1*).

The spirit of grace is beautifully expressed in this passage. One can easily discern yearnings of the heart; one can readily discover the longings of the soul, in the words, "Is there any left?"

Oh, that we might better understand the heart of God! The Bible gives some striking examples of this very thing.

1. Christ longs for Israel. Hear Him as He opens up His heart! "All day long have I stretched forth My hands unto a disobedient and a gainsaying people" (*Rom. 10:21*). What words of love are these! Words expressing no superfluity of suave insincerity, but words expressing the innermost yearnings of the great heart of the great and eternal God.

Is there anything more tender than this? "When Israel was a child, I loved him." "I taught Ephraim also to go, taking them by the arms." "I drew them with the cords of a man, with bands of love." "How

shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, Israel?" (*Hos. II:1-8*).

What depths of yearning we have in these words—words, expressing a love that cannot be shaken. Chastisement may endure for the night, but forgiveness will come to Israel in the morning.

2. Christ longs after His Church. Listen! "He loved His Church and bought it." The Church wanders, forgetting its first love, and touching the farthest reach of its defection in Laodicea. Yet, it is unto the Church at Laodicea, that Christ says: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock, if any man hear My voice and open the door, I will come in unto him and sup with him, and he with Me." What words of grace and of longing are these!

Surely the Church is dear to the heart of our Lord; and His grace will finally present us, without spot, or blemish or any such thing, before the presence of His glory.

3. Christ longs after the whole world. "God so loved the world," is enough; but much more than this is said. Behold the depths of God's grace in such words as these: "Come unto Me ALL ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest:" "I am the Door, by Me if any man will enter in, he shall be saved:" Twice in one chapter, in John 3:15 and in John 3:16, do we find the very same words: "That whosoever believeth in Him, should not perish." The very last call of the Bible is: "Whosoever will, let him come."

Of a truth, God longs after the lost. He calls for him to come. He would that "all should come

unto repentance." Our God is "The God of all grace."

GRACE UNFOLDING

"That I may shew the kindness of God unto him" (*II Sam. 9:1*).

The word translated "kindness" in this passage is the Hebrew, "chesed" and it means "grace." And wherein is the grace of God "unfolded" in this verse? In that it is kindness unto the house of Saul. The "House of Saul" stood for a dynasty opposed and antagonistic to David. Those of the "house of Saul" were enemies.

Grace is "the kindness of God toward enemies."

"God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us" (*Rom. 5:8*).

"Scarcely for a righteous man will one die, yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die, but GOD," but God, but God—

You "were dead in trespasses and sins; ye * * walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air * * children of disobedience * * conversation * * in the lusts of the flesh * * fulfilling the desires of the flesh and the mind * * by nature the children of wrath * * but God, but God, but God * * quickened, * * raised * * made us to sit with Him * * for, by grace are ye saved."

"Majestic sweetness sits enthroned,
Upon the Saviour's brow:
His head with radiant glories crowned,
His lips with grace o'erflow.

No mortal can with Him compare,
Among the sons of men;
Fairer is He, than all the fair
That fill the Heavenly train.

He saw me plunged in deep distress,
He flew to my relief;
For me He bore the shameful Cross,
And carried all my grief.

To Him I owe my life and breath,
And all the joys I have;
He makes me triumph over death,
He saves me from the grave."

GRACE EXPLAINING

"For Jonathan's sake" (*II Sam. 9:1*).

Wonderful depths are to be discovered in these simple words. "I will shew him the kindness of God for Jonathan's sake." The heart of David had been knit to Jonathan. Now, for Jonathan's sake, David will show grace to Saul.

No human example can fully set forth the grace of God, much less can any human basis of kindness fully set forth the basis of the grace of God.

Still we all know that there is declared in our key verse the fact that God's grace is made possible only in Christ, God's well-beloved Son.

"God Who is rich in love, for the great love wherewith He loved us, * * hath quickened us together with Christ, (for by grace are ye saved)."

All the grace of God, both now and in the ages to come, is made possible unto us, only in God's "kindness toward us, in Christ Jesus."

It is in Christ Jesus that we are made new creatures. It is in Christ Jesus that we, who were afar

off, are made nigh. It is in Christ Jesus that we have our access by the Spirit unto the Father.

God is a God of all grace, but God is also a God of infinite holiness and justice. God's holiness could not fellowship the unclean, and God's justice could not justify the ungodly. God's grace operated upon the only basis upon which it could operate. Christ died for sinners, and imputed unto them who believe His holiness; Christ died for sinners and fully met every demand of the justice of God. So it is that we are saved by grace, but a grace made possible in our Lord Jesus Christ.

"For nothing good have I,
Whereby Thy grace to claim;
I'll wash my garments white,
In the Blood of Calvary's Lamb,

for

Jesus paid it all,
All to Him, (God) I owe;
Sin had left a crimson stain,
He washed it white as snow."

GRACE DESIGNATING

"Jonathan hath yet a son, which is lame on his feet.

"And the king said unto him, Where is he? And Ziba said unto the king, Behold, he is in the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, in Lo-debar" (II Sam. 9:3, 4).

Let us observe the condition of Mephibosheth. How wonderful it all is! Grace designates its blessings to one so helpless and impoverished as poor Mephibosheth, the lame son of Jonathan.

1. He was at Lo-debar. Lo-debar means "no pasture." This is just where the sinner dwells. He is living in Egypt with its onions, and garlic, and

melons. He knows nothing of Canaan with its finest of the wheat, its olives and pomegranates, its milk and honey.

The sinner is "filling his belly with the husks that the swine did eat." The sinner is starving for the Bread of Life and dying in thirst for the Water of Life.

Grace stands and cries to the one who dwells at Lo-debar: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and ye who have no money come ye, buy and eat; yea, buy wine and milk, without money and without price."

Grace stands and calls to the thirsty: "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink." To the hungry, grace says: "I am the Bread of Life. He that eateth of Me shall never hunger."

2. He was in the home of Machir. The word means "sold." That is where the sinner is to-day. Sold under sin. But Machir was the son of Ammiel, and Ammiel means, "People of God."

How striking is the analogy. Mephibosheth, a son of Jonathan, who was the son of Saul, king of Israel; Mephibosheth, who should have been heir to a kingdom—sold, impoverished.

3. He was lame in both of his feet. His nurse had dropped him as she fled with him, when the news of Saul's and of Jonathan's death in the battle had come to her. In her haste, she had dropped him. He was lame in both of his feet.

The sinner too is lame. He has no strength to get to God. How beautiful it all is. "When we were yet without strength, Christ died." When

Mephibosheth was without strength, David sent and fetched him from Lo-debar.

God's grace is designated toward the ungodly, the unworthy. Christ came into the pool of Bethesda, the house of God; and said to the man thirty-eight years sick, "Arise, take up thy bed and walk."

Illustration: One day Dr. Bernardo was accosted by a dirty urchin, asking admission to the shelter of his great London Orphanage. Dr. Bernardo questioned the lad: "My boy, I do not know you. Who are you? What have you to recommend you?" Immediately the youthful waif held up the threads of his torn and ragged coat and said: "If you please sir, I thought these here would be all I needed to recommend me." No wonder that the man of God caught the lad in his arms and received him. He had appealed to grace.

GRACE FETCHING

"Then King David sent, and fetched him out of the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel from Lo-debar" (II Sam. 9:5).

The word "fetching" is not much used, but it is a word which is very expressive. It is not only "tell him to come;" but it is also "provide all means for his coming."

This is just what our Blessed Lord does. He invites us to come to Him! and then He sends us One to conduct us to Him; and then He provides for all the exigencies of our coming.

"He found him in a desert land, and in the waste and howling wilderness; He led him about, He instructed him. * * He kept him. * * As an eagle fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her

wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: so the Lord did lead him" (*Deut. 32:11, 12*).

Abraham sent Eliezer for his son's bride. Eliezer said to Rebekah, "Will you go?" The damsel answered, "I will go." Then she was escorted across the desert sands unto Abraham and unto Isaac. Eliezer "fetched her." He furnished the camel, and he conducted her, and he provided all things for her safety and comfort.

God has sent the Holy Spirit to call us from Lodebar. He "fetches us" over the sands of this life. In Him—our Paraclete, our Heavenly Conductor we will find all our needs supplied; until He brings us home to Glory, and to our God, and to our blessed Bridegroom.

GRACE BESTOWING

"Now when Mephibosheth * * was come unto David, he fell on his face, and did reverence. And David said, Mephibosheth. And he answered, Behold thy servant!"

And David said unto him, Fear not * * I will restore thee all * * thou shalt eat bread at my table continually" (*II Sam. 9:6, 7*).

How precious is this scene.

1. The picture of Mephibosheth's appreciation. Jonathan's son came with no sounding of trumpets, as though he had accomplished some worthy feat. He came in humility, confessing his own worthlessness. He said, "What is thy servant that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?"

Grace excludes boasting, because grace is bestowed where there is no worth. The sinner cannot begin to recount before God his merits. There is no merit. The sinner deserves nothing but the

house of Machir, nothing but Lo-debar. The sinner deserves no more than judgment and eternal death.

The sinner will not so much as lift up his face, but beating upon his breast he says: "God be merciful unto me the sinner."

2. The picture of David's kindness. To David and to him alone belongs the praise of lifting up Mephibosheth. It was not David and Mephibosheth, but David alone.

The sinner gives all glory to God. Grace does it all and therefore deserves all the praise.

Consider the results of David's kindness. He restored to Mephibosheth all he had lost, and besides all of that, he gave him place at his own table continually.

Such kindness bespeaks the gifts of God. We receive back all we lost in Adam, and besides we receive much more, because we are made to sit with Him in the Heavenlies forevermore. Grace gives to us all that belongs to the Giver of grace. "Father, I will that they may be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glories." This is good, but this is not all. "And the glory that Thou hast given Me I have given to them."

To the elder son the father said, "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine."

Thank God, for the bestowals of grace. And what will it be in the by and by? For in the ages to come, God will reveal unto us "the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus."

GRACE PRAISED

"My lord the king, is as an angel of God" (*II Sam. 19:27*).

It is necessary here to study a bit of David's subsequent history, after he had restored Mephibosheth.

1. Absalom had raised an insurrection against his father David.

2. David had fled from the city followed by his faithful servants.

3. Absalom had been slain in battle and the kingdom made sure unto David.

4. David had been met by Ziba, who was steward over all of the goods of Saul, which had been restored unto Mephibosheth. Ziba had lied unto David concerning Mephibosheth, stating that Mephibosheth had refused to follow him, thinking that David's discomfiture might mean the restoring of the kingdom unto his own hands, as one of Saul's sons.

5. Howbeit, from the day David had left, and until his return Mephibosheth had remained loyal and true to David. He had neither "dressed his feet, nor trimmed his beard, nor washed his clothes."

6. Now that David had returned in peace, Mephibosheth hastened to meet him. He reminded David of how he had received him, when he was a dead man; how he had accorded him a seat at his own table and how he was unto him, "as an angel of God."

7. Mephibosheth had but one great joy, and that

was that his lord, the king, had "come again in peace to his own house."

The brief stating of this history, reminds us of the fact that our Lord Jesus Christ is rejected among men. He has gone into the Heavens. We, too, should stand aloof from any fellowship which might in any way discredit our allegiance to the King. Our one chief desire should be the return of Christ and crowning.

Lift up your heads, pilgrims a-weary,
See day's approach, now crimson the sky:
Night shadows flee, and your Beloved,
Awaited with longing, at last draweth nigh.

Dark was the night, sin warred against us,
Heavy the load of sorrow we bore:
But now we see signs of His coming;
Our hearts glow within us, joy's cup runneth o'er.

O blessed hope! O blissful promise!
Filling our hearts with rapture Divine:
O day of days! Hail Thy appearing!
Thy transcendent glory, forever shall shine.

Even so come, precious Lord Jesus
Creation waits redemption to see:
Caught up with clouds, soon we shall meet Thee.
O blessed assurance, forever with Thee.

—*Mabel Johnston Camp.*

UZZA

UZZA

A Disastrous Inquiry (*I Chron. 13:1*).

A Disastrous Occurrence (*I Chron. 13:9*).

Another Dead Man in the Road (*Matt. 27:46, 50*).

David's Displeasure (*I Chron. 13:11*).

David Afraid of God (*I Chron. 13:12*).

Obed-edom Blessed (*I Chron. 13:14*).

The Ark Brought Home (*I Chron. 16:1*).

Bringing up arks, and sacrifices and giving, and praying and preaching and singing are unacceptable to God unless they are rendered in the way commanded—"for to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams" (*I Sam. 15:22*).

"Rebellion is as the sin of divination, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry" (*I Sam. 15:23*).

When one rejects the Word of the Lord, they must suffer the results of their disobedience.

We are living in an age when people seem to think that there should be much liberty of action in the things of God. That it does not matter so much after all, just so you are sincere. This is all wrong. It does matter. God must be obeyed.

We are living in an age when people are consulting with "captains and every leader," and we need to beware, for they will surely lead us away from the will of God.

We are living in an age when people are mimicking the world, and patterning the things of God after the fashion sheet of a wicked and an adulterous generation.

A DISASTROUS INQUIRY

"And David consulted with the captains of thousands and hundreds, and with every leader" (*1 Chron. 13:1*).

There are some potent lessons we need to learn about how to discover and how to carry out God's will.

The Ark of the Covenant had been for some time with the Philistines, and Israel was losing many blessings thereby. Surely they needed the Ark, where God dwelt with them, and surely God wanted them to bring the Ark back again. Let us then look into this matter and learn wherein David was right and wherein he went astray.

1. It was right for David to ask the captains and every leader about bringing back the Ark. They were certainly, all of them concerned in this matter. They needed the Ark, as well as David; they were vitally connected with its return. What good would the Ark do, if the people were not interested and directly concerned in its return?

David was happy to find a ready response with the people, for "all the congregation said that they would do so; for the thing was right in the eyes of all the people" (*vs. 4*).

Thus far everything was auspicious, and we believe God was well pleased.

2. The first step wherein David veered from the right, was in his statement, which he made unto all the congregation: "If it seem good unto you, and that it be of the Lord."

The entering wedge is, that God is placed wrong, positionally. In all things He should be first. David

placed Him second. Perhaps unintentionally, but certainly, wrongly.

Every one seems to want to drag God in somewhere. They get up their scheme and then ask God to bless it. They plan out some new departure and then tag on God's name, to what is purely a worldly enterprise.

We should never say, "If it seem good unto you, and." Our method of approach should be always: "If it seem good unto God, and."

3. The second step wherein David went astray was that he consulted about **how** the Ark should be brought up, when the Lord had said **how** it was to be brought.

The Ark by construction was made to be carried and not carted. The Ark had handles for the very purpose of being borne upon the shoulders of the Levites.

The Ark by instruction was ordered to be carried and not carted. Had David stayed upon his God and obeyed His voice, he would never have allowed the captains and the people to have placed God's Ark upon a newly made cart.

We must at all costs cling to every "Thus saith the Lord." We cannot afford to hear any contrary voice, no matter how winsome or how strong that voice may be. "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it."

A DISASTROUS OCCURRENCE

"And when they came unto the threshingfloor of Chidon, Uzza put forth his hand to hold the Ark; for the oxen stumbled" (*I Chron. 13:9*).

1. Let us observe a good thing done in the wrong way. It was right to bring home the Ark, it was wrong to cart it.

Of course, it was very pleasing to the natural man to cart the Ark. It looked so nice—and a new cart too. Others did it that way. The Philistines did. They were such nice people.

Yet things that are worldly and up-to-date may be an abomination unto the Lord. Let us beware when we pattern our service after the world.

Laodicea is thy name. World-pleasers. Walking according to the course of this age. Patterning after an age whose stage scenery is passing away.

But, everybody does it. Then, child of God, do it not.

But, everybody goes. Then, Christian, go not.

"Vox populi, vox Dei?" Never. The voice of the people is not the voice of God. The ways and the thoughts of the Lord are as far separated from the ways and the thoughts of the world as the heavens are far above the earth.

2. Let us observe a natural consequence of doing the right thing in the wrong way. "The oxen stumbled." Of course, they stumbled. But, the oxen had no right being there. If David had followed the Word of God, instead of the wishes of the people, there would have been no stumbling

oxen and no swaying cart, with God's holy Ark almost dashed to the ground.

We think our way is best. It is not. We think we can improve upon the Gospel message. We cannot.

Once God said unto Moses, "See that thou make it according to the pattern showed thee in the mount." And in the Book of Exodus how gracious do the seven times repeated words of the last chapter sound: "As the Lord commanded Moses." No marvel that when the work was completed, "Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle."

And if the Ark had been Scripturally carried, the glory of the Lord would have crowned that day with praise.

3. Let us note God's judgment upon Uzza:

(1) Uzza did the natural thing, and seemingly correct thing, yea, he did the heroic and commendatory thing. The oxen stumbled, the Ark was about to fall, and Uzza leaped to the rescue. He put forth his hand to hold the Ark. Dear fellow! Shall we not put a laurel wreath upon his brow? Let us crown him as the hero of the hour!

What a catastrophe it would have been had the Ark actually fallen! The whole beauty of the day's joy would have been marred. In Israel there had never been known anything quite so awful, as the Ark wherein the Lord met with His people, falling to the ground.

Uzza thought to save the day. He doubtless was moved by honest purpose, and even by sincere love

when he leaped forward and held forth his hand to steady the reeling, tumbling Ark.

(2) "And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzza, and He smote him because he put his hand to the Ark: and there he died before God."

What! Uzza dead! Our hero slain! Horrors!

But wait a moment—Uzza had no right to touch the Ark.

But the Ark was falling!—The Ark had no need to have been falling.

But the oxen stumbled! There should have been no oxen.

But the Philistines did it thus! Just so. And that is the reason that Uzza is dead in the road.

"Pride cometh before a fall." We want to do it in the proper way; the way the world does it; the way the world approves.

ANOTHER DEAD MAN IN THE ROAD

"Eli, Eli, Lama Sabachthani? that is to say, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

"Jesus, when He had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost" (*Matt. 27:46, 50*).

1. God is always angry against sin. God is a just God. God deals without mercy when He sends forth judgment against sin.

There are many instances of the judgments of a just and holy God. From the expulsion of Adam and Eve, and the curse upon Cain, through the deluge and the destruction of Babel and God's wrath against His own people Israel, until this day there

are many, many instances of the rightful wrath of a just God.

There also remains a day of judgment for this Godless age. Our Lord is coming in flaming fire taking vengeance. God's seals and trumpets and vials all tell stories of coming judgments for this inhabited earth. The whole world will reel to and fro like a drunken man. All joy will be darkened and the mirth of the land will be gone.

There remains beyond the judgments of the Second Coming of Christ, another day, when the dead, small and great, will stand before God; when the books shall be opened and God will judge every one whose name is not found in the Book of Life, according to the things written in the books. Then will the wicked be turned into the lake of fire and be tormented, day and night, forever.

2. If God judges sin, and Uzza is dead in the road; if God judges sin and will still judge sin, without mercy, then need we marvel that when Christ became sin for us; that when Christ bore our iniquities and our transgressions, there was, of necessity, another dead Man in the road?

God hid His face from Christ, because Christ stood there in our stead. God's breach upon Uzza, the popular hero of the hour, the man who seemingly did the right thing, but who before God, did the wholly wicked thing of touching His Ark, is a judgment easy to comprehend, by the side of the fact that God put Christ to grief, and made His soul an offering for sin.

If God could not spare His Son, as His Son went in our place and bore our sins, then how could He spare Uzza?

DAVID'S DISPLEASURE

"And David was displeased, because the Lord had made a breach upon Uzza: wherefore the name of that place is called Perez-uzza" (*I Chron. 13:11*).

David was displeased with the Lord, not with himself. He blamed God, not David.

How often do we bring upon ourselves merited censure and merited hurt, and then we blame God for it.

The same sun that burns, lightens our pathway. The same electric current that sends a bolt of death through the one who crosses its pathway, sends power to the one who harnesses it.

The God Who slew Uzza, and Who slew Christ, is the same God of Whom it was said: "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men."

"Behold, therefore the goodness and the severity of God." If we believe, if we receive, if we obey, goodness: if we reject, if we refuse, if we disobey, severity.

"He that believeth hath everlasting life."

"He that believeth not shall not see life."

A Levite, carrying the Ark—alive, blessed, rewarded.

Uzza touching the Ark—judged, condemned, dead in the road.

Had David read the Book of God, that gave minute instructions as to how the Ark should be taken, there would have been no breach made upon Uzza.

Let us seek causes. Let us examine the "why" before we blame results.

DAVID AFRAID OF GOD

"And David was afraid of God that day, saying, How shall I bring the Ark of God home to me?" (*I Chron. 13:12*).

Sin always makes us fear God. Adam and Eve, as soon as they sinned, hid away from God. The wicked will yet cry to the rocks and to the mountains to fall on them and hide them from the face of Him Who sits on the throne.

The very last scene of all, is that of the wicked going away into everlasting punishment.

Afraid of God! The child is afraid when sin is in his life. He cannot look squarely in the face of his father.

Afraid? For very shame! David soon learned the folly of his fear. He soon learned that God delights to shelter and to succor and to support His feeblest saint. How beautifully did David write his heart throbs, in later days:

"I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and fortress:
My God; in Him will I trust.
Surely He shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler,
And from the noisome pestilence.
He shall cover thee with His feathers,
And under His wings shalt thou trust."

But for the time being, David was afraid of God, because He saw the judgments of God. This fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Afraid of God? Yes, afraid to disobey Him; afraid to sin against Him.

But, never afraid of God when the heart is clean, and the sheltering wing secures. It is unconfessed and wilful sin, and even ignorant but nevertheless

ruthless sin, that brings hurried chastisement; but "a broken spirit and a contrite heart, Thou wilt not despise, O God."

OBED—EDOM BLESSED

"And the Ark remained with the family of Obed—edom in his house three months. And the Lord blessed the house of Obed—edom, and all that he had" (*I Chron. 13:14*).

1. When David became filled with fear, he carried the Ark to the house of Obed—edom. That was certainly David's loss, and Obed—edom's gain.

2. The Lord blessed the house of Obed—edom and all that he had. This is always true. Wherever God is the center of any family circle, the honored and loved member (not merely guest), that family will always be blessed.

Thank God, for the family altar. Thank God, for the blessings which follow its faithful administrations.

Thank God, for the home where father teaches these things to his children and talks of them to his household.

Thank God, where the mother is true and righteous, following the Lord with winsome faithfulness.

A Christian home is a God-blessed home.

Obed—edom and his wife, perhaps, feared somewhat when the Ark was first left at their house. But soon they began to observe that somehow or other everything was being blessed that they touched. The children were blessed, their store was blessed, everything was blessed.

Be not afraid to open thine heart and thine house to the Lord Jesus. You will never know how much you owe to Him and His presence with you, until you see Him in the Glory:

“When this passing world is gone,
When has sunk yon radiant sun,
When the pearly gate I gain,
Never to go out again;
Then, Lord, shall I fully know,
Not till then, how much I owe.”

“When I stand before the throne,
Dressed in beauty not my own;
When I see Thee as Thou art,
Love Thee with unsinning heart,
Then, Lord, shall I fully know—
Not till then, how much I owe.”

THE ARK BROUGHT HOME

“So they brought the Ark of God, and set it in the midst of the tent that David had pitched for it” (*I Chron. 16:1*).

1. It was not long until David had heard how God blessed the house of Obed-edom. He soon learned that it was not a thing to be dreaded, after all, to have God in the midst. And so he determined to fetch the Ark back to Israel and to the city of David.

2. David before he sent for the Ark, this second time, went to the Book and studied the instructions God had plainly written down. He did not consult with the captains of thousands and of hundreds and with every leader; he did not consult with the congregation—he consulted with God.

“Then David said, None ought to carry the Ark of God, but the Levites: for them hath the Lord

chosen to carry the Ark of God, and to minister unto Him forever."

3. Then David gathered all Israel together to bring up the Ark. They brought it forth with great joy and with shoutings; with the sound of the cornet, and psaltery and harp and trumpet and cymbal.

Chenaniah was the song leader, and there was great rejoicing.

4. "And the children of the Levites, bare the Ark of God on their shoulders with the staves thereon, as Moses commanded, according to the Word of the Lord."

David had come to fully understand why the breach had been made upon Uzza. He said: "Ye are the chief of the fathers of the Levites; sanctify yourselves both ye, and your brethren, that ye may bring up the Ark of the Lord God of Israel unto the place that I have prepared for it. For because ye did it not at the first, the Lord our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought Him not after the due order."

Surely it pays to obey.

"Thou sweet beloved will of God,
My anchor ground, my fortress hill,
My spirit's silent, fair abode,
In Thee I hide me, and am still.

"O will, that willest good alone,
Lead Thou the way, Thou guidest best:
A little child, I follow on,
And trusting, lean upon Thy breast.

"Thy beautiful sweet will, my God,
Holds fast in its sublime embrace
My captive will, a gladsome bird,
Prisoned in such a realm of grace.

"Within this place of certain good
 Love evermore expands her wings,
 Or nestling in Thy perfect choice,
 Abides content with what it brings.

"Oh, lightest burden, sweetest yoke!
 It lifts, it bears my happy soul,
 It gives wings to this poor heart;
 My freedom is Thy grand control.

"Upon God's will I lay me down,
 As child upon its mother's breast;
 No silken couch, nor softest bed,
 Could ever give me such deep rest.

"Thy wonderful grand will, my God,
 With triumph now I make it mine;
 And faith shall cry a joyous, Yes!
 To every dear command of Thine."

JONAH

JONAH

Selections from the Book of Jonah

Jonah Commissioned (*Jon. 1:1,2*).

Jonah Fleeing from God (*Jon. 1:3*).

Jonah Pursued by a Storm (*Jon. 1:4*).

Jonah Discovered (*Jon. 1:7*).

Jonah Swallowed, but Undigested (*Jon. 1:17*).

Jonah's Prayer (*Jon. 2:2*).

Jonah Recommissioned (*Jon. 3:1*).

Nineveh Repents (*Jon. 3:5*).

Jonah under the Gourd (*Jon. 4:6*).

The Book of Jonah is the butt of much ridicule from the critics. Men who know not God speak of it as "a big fish story," and laugh as though it was some legend of ancient lore.

To the believer, the Book of Jonah is a remarkable record of Divinely penned history, which is filled with wonderful types of our Lord and also of Israel, our Lord's chosen people.

Jonah presents to us, also, some solemn warnings for backsliders. In this Book we have described God's method of dealing with runaway saints, and how God reinstates His followers.

Jonah should not be considered a backslider in the common sense of that term. Jonah did not fall into one of Satan's worldly snares. Jonah has no immorality, recorded against him. He may have been clean and righteous in deportment, but, he ran away from God.

We need more and more to come to understand that every believer who is unfaithful in warning the wicked and in seeking the salvation of the lost,

is fleeing from the presence of God. Christians who fail to press the work of witnessing for Christ, wherever and whenever the Lord commands, are backsliders.

In the Book of Jonah we have displayed before us, the heart of God toward the lost. There is no more tender passage anywhere than the verse, "And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city?" It is an Old Testament John 3:16, breathing forth the love of God toward multitudes of sinners, and toward little children. Even the "much cattle" are held in mind, by a compassionate God.

JONAH COMMISSIONED

"Now the Word of the Lord came unto Jonah, the son of Amittai, saying,

Arise and go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it, for their wickedness is come up before Me" (*Jon. 1:1, 2*).

1. Let us get before us the city of Nineveh. The key verse says, "That great city." Nineveh was a city of some six hundred thousand souls. The beginning of the city goes back to the times of Nimrod the mighty hunter. See Genesis 10:8-11. It was a city given over to sin and vile practices.

2. The wickedness of Nineveh was not hidden unto God. The text says, It had "come up before" God. So it was, in the case of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah; so it was in the case of the whole world in the days of Noah. May we not safely say: so it is to-day? Surely the sins of our great cities must rise like a stench in the nostrils of our God.

3. Jonah's commission was, "Go and cry against Nineveh." This little word "go," heads the great

commission of the Church. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature."

The one word that sums up the call of God to the world, is the word "come." The one word that sums up God's command to the Church is the word "go."

"How shall they hear without a preacher?" No wonder that Christ said, "I must needs go through Samaria." No wonder we read: "The Gospel must be preached." When the call is made; "Who will go?" shall we not respond? "Here am I; send me!"

4. Back of the word "go" is the heart of a compassionate God. Our God is not willing that any should perish. The angel of mercy gives the call for repentance and faith before the angel of wrath goes forth. Every call of the Gospel herald is a plea from God to "flee the wrath to come." We cry against a sinner, we preach coming judgment, in order that the sinner may turn to God and be saved.

JONAH FLEEING FROM GOD

"But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord" (*Jon. 1:3*).

1. We have before us the picture of a deserter. A child of God fleeing from a definite call to service. Is not the Church filled with many such men and women? Nice folk, to be sure, but folk with no passion, and with no compassion for the lost. Folk who are wholly neglecting God's command to go out into the byways and the hedges and bring them in.

He who "knows his Master's will and doeth it not to him it is sin." There are many Christians

who are living good and clean but self-centered lives. They are doing nothing toward winning souls. Such saints are backsliders, running away from God.

2. We might try to fathom the reason for Jonah's disobedience. Why did he flee?

Perhaps he had no love in his heart for the Ninevites. Perhaps he counted them as the enemies of Israel. Perhaps he feared that his preaching against them, might lead them to repent and that God would hear their cry and spare them, when he, Jonah, did not want them spared.

Perhaps he feared the long trip, or felt he could be of better service nearer home; perhaps he felt the trip a dangerous one, too full of risk to himself. Whatever he thought or feared or felt, he held a controversy with God.

How unlike this controversy, was the prompt obedience of Philip. When the call came to Philip to go toward Gaza, in the road that was desert, immediately he arose and went.

How different was the obedience of Paul. When Paul was called to go far hence to the Gentiles, he obeyed the Heavenly vision.

3. Jonah went down to Joppa. The word means "beautiful." From Joppa he found a ship going to Tarshish, and he paid his fare and went down into the hold of the ship.

This presents to us a pitiful sight, but a sight not at all uncommon in our own day. Jonah lies asleep in the boat, while Nineveh is neglected and left unwarned of her approaching curse.

Many saints to-day are living in comfort and

peace, oblivious to the conditions of the lost. The wicked are rushing on to hell, and the saved are doing nothing to rescue them. God has commissioned them as His ambassadors, to preach salvation, but they are running away, and refusing to lift a helping hand.

JONAH PURSUED BY A STORM

"But the Lord sent out a great wind upon the sea, * * so that the ship was like to be broken" (*Jon. 1:4*).

1. The first thing we have before us is the faithfulness of God toward a faithless Prophet. Why did not God let Jonah go his way, just as Jonah was letting Nineveh go its way? Because the God Who watches over His saints never slumbers nor sleeps. "Great is His faithfulness." He says: "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Jonah is running away from God, and God is going right after him, to bring him back to obedience.

2. And how does God pursue His runaway Prophet? He sends after him a great wind, a veritable Euroclydon, until the ship was about to be broken.

It is still true, "Whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth." The only way to get some people back to God, is by winds and waves of trouble and distress.

Illustration: An artist, painting the dome of a great cathedral, stood on his high scaffold admiring the beauty of his work, forgetting, withal, that he was stepping back, dangerously near the edge of his scaffold. His assistant saw his peril and quick as thought, he leaped forward and struck his brush across the picture. The artist caught his

hand in amazement, and cried: "Why did you spoil my picture?" "I did it to save your life," was the reply.

How many times is it necessary for God to spoil some pretty picture of ours in order that He may call us back to His loving favor.

3. Another lesson is seen in this, that the disobedience of the Prophet caused the whole ship, and doubtless many other ships, to be in danger. It is written: "No man liveth unto himself."

If the backslider could only sin without bringing some disaster upon some one else it would be bad enough, but when he endangers the welfare of others then let him stop, and look, and listen.

In the Gospels we read: "And there were other little boats." The storm on Galilee affected them as well as the boat in which the disciples sat. Let us remember the "other little boats."

4. Let us look a moment at this "sleeper." Asleep to his responsibility; asleep to the cries of the Ninevites; asleep to the dangers of the mariners. What a picture of a prayerless believer we have here! The others, the heathen aboard ship are praying, but Jonah is sleeping. What a God-dishonoring sleeper! "What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise and call upon thy God."

JONAH DISCOVERED

"And they said every one to his fellow, Come, and let us cast lots, that we may see for whose cause this evil has come upon us. So they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah" (*Jon. 1:7*).

1. Jonah may have thought himself secure in the hold of the ship, but he learned that God could drag him forth; he may have felt that he had averted the eye of God, but God had found him out.

David sinned, but God sought him out and broke his heart concerning his sin. "Be sure your sin will find you out." This is quite as true of saints as it is of sinners.

2. God's dealings with Jonah did not cause him to relinquish his faith. Quite the opposite is true. Jonah was running away from God, and God came hot upon his track and discovered him. Then, Jonah confessed before the heathen sailors, saying, "I am an Hebrew; and I fear the God of Heaven, Who hath made the sea and the dry land."

A man who is saved may get out of God's plan and purpose, but will not disown his faith. Peter cursed and swore, and, in a moment of thoughtless haste and anger, said: "I know not the Man;" but Peter never failed in his faith. The fact is that Peter would, at any moment, have been ready to die for his faith. Instead of the storm making Jonah defame his Lord, the storm brought Jonah back to his senses, and to a clear and clean-cut confession of his Lord.

3. Jonah quickly acknowledged his sin before those sailors, and he said: "For my sake this great tempest is upon you."

Then Jonah said, "Take me up and cast me forth into the sea, so shall the sea be calm unto you."

The men aboard ship fully realized that their lives were in jeopardy because of Jonah's disobedience, "nevertheless they rowed hard to bring the ship to land, but they could not."

So, finally with a prayer that God would not lay the blood of an innocent life upon them, they cast him overboard, "and the sea ceased her raging."

It might be well to stop just long enough to remind our hearts that just here we have a wonderful picture of the substitutionary suffering of Christ. Jonah suffered guiltily, for his own sins, and the sea was thus calmed to the mariners. Christ suffered the guiltless, for the guilty, and the sea was made calm for us.

JONAH SWALLOWED BUT UNDIGESTED

"Now the Lord prepared a great fish, and it swallowed up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish, three days and three nights" (*Jon. 1:17*).

1. Here is where many part company with the historicity of Jonah. They call it a legendary parable, or a fanciful fabrication, but wholly deny the possibility of a literal Jonah and a literally prepared fish; and of Jonah surviving a three days' conscious existence in the belly of the fish.

Why do men cavil at the Word of God? In our day men prepare under-sea crafts, submarines, and they fit them up with every modern convenience, so that groups of men may live in comparative comfort, under the sea surface. Of course, we be-

lieve in the possibility of the submarine, because we see it with our very eyes; we have great faith in the prowess of man.

Why not, then, believe in the greatness of God? Could not He Who made the worlds, and Who holds them in their orbits, by the word of His power, prepare a fish? Certainly, He could. The fact is, when the first word of the Bible is accepted, "In the beginning God," the stories of Jonah and the fish, and of the sun standing still in the valley of Adjalon, and of Daniel in the lions' den; and of Christ walking on the water, are all within the reach of simple faith.

2. Jonah was shut up to God, at last. He could hardly run away from God now. Sometimes God puts us where we will have to think. He lays us flat on our back where we can hardly see our toes, in order that He may make us stop and consider.

3. Jonah found no desire for prayer while he was safely housed in the ship, running away from God; it is quite different now. "Then Jonah prayed unto the Lord his God out of the fish's belly. He cried by reason of his affliction.

It is well worth the experience of any suffering, if it teaches prayerless lips to pray. Certainly no chastening is enjoyed, but "afterward it bringeth forth fruit unto holiness."

JONAH'S PRAYER

"Out of the belly of hell I cried, and Thou heardest my voice" (*Jon. 2:2*).

It is our purpose to note some of the steps set forth before us in Jonah's prayer.

1. "Out of the belly of hell I cried." This verse expresses the misery of the Prophet. The man who runs away from God will surely be given a cup of bitterness to drink. It is no light thing when one forsakes the "fountain of Living Waters" and begins to hew out for himself cisterns, broken cisterns, which can hold no water.

Sooner or later the backslider will come to know that it is "an evil thing and bitter" to forsake the Lord his God, and to scatter his ways under every green tree.

2. "Thy floods compassed me about, all Thy billows and Thy waves passed over me."

These words express the enormity of Jonah's judgment. So also did David feel when God's judgments fell upon him, and his young child died.

Floods and billows carry with them the thought of judgments—judgments which overwhelm the soul.

3. "Then said I, I am cast out of Thy sight." Jonah feels that there is no help for him in God. He fears that he has gone beyond the hope of restoring grace. He fears the worst has come; he is in abject despair.

David too cried, "Hide not Thy face from me."

Can there be a sadder experience for a human soul than to feel that he has gone beyond the pale of grace; that there remains no more sacrifice for sin? Oh, how lonely, forlorn and forsaken must that soul feel who fails to get one approving look, one ray of light from the countenance of God.

And yet when the believer sins, God must break fellowship with him. Poor Peter felt that there was

not one ray of light left, when he had "cursed and swore" and said, "I know not the Man." From the Cross a few hours later, Christ spoke to John and to Mary, and to the repentant thief, and to the multitudes; but, to broken-hearted Peter, not one word.

For three days the "billows" and the "waves" passed over Peter, and he felt that he was cast out of God's sight forever. No matter how much the Father loves the saint, He must hide His face when the saint runs away from His presence.

4. "When my soul fainted within me, I remembered the Lord." Just so. Jonah's tears and cry proved a telescope through which he looked and saw, magnified, the grace of God. He began to consider his ways. In the storm, and in the casting of the lot, and in his being thrown overboard, and in his being swallowed of the great fish, he now saw the hand of a loving God.

He remembered the Lord. His sorrows drove him back to God. Thus, in the 3d Psalm, does David record his own experience. His soul had "fainted within him," then he "cried unto the Lord," and "He heard me out of His holy hill."

5. "My prayer came up unto Thee." Bless God that there is never a time when the repentant child of God cannot get through the mists and reach the Lord. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

6. "Thou broughtest up my life from corruption." "Salvation is of the Lord!" What a note of joy and of faith is here! Before Jonah is delivered he counts

the work as done. He cries: "I am delivered;" he affirms: "Salvation is of the Lord."

No wonder that, immediately, the fish vomited up Jonah onto the land. No darkness of despair can last, no casting from God's presence can continue, when once the soul prays through to God.

Jonah restored to victorious prayer and Jonah filled with renewed faith, must be vomited up onto the land.

It is prayer that changes things. It is prayer, the prayer of confession, followed by the prayer of faith in the Living God, that brings deliverance from chastisement.

JONAH RECOMMISSIONED

"And the Word of the Lord came unto Jonah the second time, saying, Arise, and go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto them the preaching that I bid thee" (Jon. 3:1).

1. "The second time." How thankful we are for these words. The vessel was marred in the hands of the potter "so he made it again." "Go tell My disciples and Peter." The "and Peter" was "the second time." Peter counted himself out, but God counted him in.

Some one has said, "The bird with the broken pinion never soared so high again." But that is not true. When the backslider comes back to God, and is forgiven and restored, he may get back again into service, with even renewed and redoubled power.

2. "Arise and go to Nineveh." When God has restored, He always recommissions. 7 Get back to the old job. On to Nineveh, is God's voice to one who ran away. One cannot but think of the time

wasted. Jonah ran from the presence of the Lord; immediately he began to wander about under clouds of judgment; he has harrowing experiences; finally he is back again at the crossing of the roads—back to the very spot from whence he took the bypath. But, oh, the wasted time.

To Jacob it was, "Back to Bethel;" to Onesimus, it was "Back to Philippi." It is always "back," to the soul that runs away from God. Peter was told of the Cross of Christ; he began to rebuke the Lord and to say: "Pity Thyself, Lord." There Peter's backsliding began. When he was, after many an heartache, restored, immediately the Cross loomed again in sight. It was: "Back to the cross roads, Peter," and it was back to the Cross. "When thou art old, another shall gird thee * * this spake He concerning the cross, by which Peter should glorify God." Then said Christ "Follow thou Me."

3. "Preach the preaching that I bid thee." The preacher must obey God implicitly. He must preach what God gives him to preach. The question is not what do the people want; nor is it, what will please the people—we must preach what we are told to preach.

Ours is not to make a gospel, but to preach the Gospel. God pity men who pose as ministers of Christ, but who are proclaiming messages which they get from the pulse throbbings of the twentieth century.

NINEVEH REPENTS

"So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even unto the least of them" (*Jon. 3:5*).

1. We can easily imagine the scene before us. Jonah wending his way through the crowded streets of the great city, and crying: "Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be destroyed."

Just now we need prophets to cry out a similar message, for the days of coming judgment, the judgments that shall precede the return of our Lord to this earth, are already upon us. Let us cry aloud, and spare not. Let us sound the alarm. Let us warn the people that the time of Jacob's trouble is at hand.

2. Nineveh repents. There are four steps that might well be stressed. (1) They believed God. But the people of to-day do not believe the fact of coming judgments. (2) They put on sackcloth, and fasted. The people of to-day are putting on festal robes; they are reveling in pastimes. (3) They, turned from their evil ways. The people of to-day are pressing on, headlong in their sins. (4) "They cried mightily unto God." The people of to-day are making no prayer for mercy.

What then is our conclusion? Simply this: "They repented at the preaching of Jonah and a greater than Jonah is here." Also this: "It shall be more tolerable for Nineveh in the day of judgment" than for the people of this enlightened day. And also this: "The men of Nineveh shall rise up and condemn this generation."

3. "And God repented of the evil that He said He would do unto them! and He did it not." When Nineveh turned, God turned. When Nineveh repented of her sins, God repented of His curse. How else could the God, Who changeth not, act? Had God cursed a repentant city, God had become no more a "gracious God;" thus it was that Nineveh's change of living made necessary God's change of action.

JONAH UNDER THE GOURD

"And the Lord God prepared a gourd, and made it to come up over Jonah" (*Jon. 4:6*).

1. Jonah having delivered his message, went out of the city and sat down to see what would happen. He had no love for Nineveh, and he did not want Nineveh to heed his word, nor to repent, for Jonah knew that God was "merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness." Thus when Nineveh repented and God spared the city, Jonah held controversy with God. He bemoaned his very life and prayed to die.

2. Over the angered Prophet God prepared a gourd. "And Jonah was exceeding glad for the gourd." The hot sun had been blistering his head, the winds had been scorching his face, so he was glad for the gourd.

How strange it was that Jonah wanted a protecting gourd for himself, and unrelenting judgments for Nineveh. But so it was.

3. God prepared a worm. There are four things prepared in this record. (1) The great fish was prepared; (2) The gourd was prepared; (3) The worm was prepared, and (4) The east wind was

prepared. God brought about just those things that were needed to manifest His grace.

When the worm came and the east wind followed, poor Jonah was at his row's end; he fainted and longed to die. Then God once more had Jonah where He could speak to him. The belly of the fish had sufficed to bring Jonah to the place of obedience, but the gourd and the worm and the hot wind were needed to bring Jonah to appreciate the compassionate heart of God.

And God said: "Thou hast had pity for the gourd * * and should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than six-score thousand persons who cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?"

Nowhere in the Bible can we look any deeper into the heart of our blessed God than here. His goodness and His severity is set forth, side by side. His threatened judgments on Nineveh; His storm, His hot sun and winds, all reveal His wrath against sin: His prepared fish, His prepared gourd, and His "should not I spare Nineveh?" all reveal the exceeding riches of His mercy and of His grace.

Stop one moment, in conclusion, and meditate upon those two expressions which reveal to us the accumulative reasons that God gives for sparing Nineveh. "Sixscore thousand children" (who cannot discern their right hand from their left). "Much cattle."

Children and cattle, both are encompassed by the compassionate God. My God is a God of all grace, to Him I bend the knee, and worship and adore His name.

JONAH, A TYPE OF ISRAEL

JONAH. A TYPE OF ISRAEL

Selections from the Book of Jonah

A Commission to the Gentiles (*Jon. 1:2 with Gen. 12:23*).

The Commission Disobeyed (*Jon. 1:3 with Jer. 13:11*).

Pursued with Judgments (*Jon. 1:4 with Is. 5:5*).

Scattered among the Nations (*Jon. 1:15 with Amos 9:9*).

Swallowed but Undigested (*Jon. 1:17 with Is. 49:6*).

In Anguish Cries to God (*Jon. 2:1 with Zech. 12:10*).

Restored to the Land (*Jon. 2:10 with Ezek. 36:24*).

Recommissioned to the Gentiles (*Jon. 3:1,2; with Zeph. 3:20*).

The Gentiles Turn to God (*Jon. 3:5 with Zech. 2:10,11*).

Jonah's experiences present to us, in a nutshell, the whole story of Israel. God spake unto us in the old' times in the experiences of the Prophets, as well as by the Prophets' words.

Abraham's experiences, and Isaac's experiences and Joseph's experiences were all types, written for our admonition.

Hosea was to "go, love a woman," according to the love of God for the children of Israel, and Hosea stands throughout his personal experiences with his wife; her wooing, her bearing children; her deserting her husband; her being bought back again and her abiding in the after years faithful, as a type of Israel and of God's dealings with Israel.

Joshua, the priest, in the days of Zechariah, as he stands clothed with filthy garments seeking cleansing; as he stands resisted of the devil; as satan is rebuked and Joshua's filthy garments are removed; as a fair miter is placed upon his head—in all of this, Joshua is a true type of Israel.

So we need not be surprised if Jonah's marvelous experiences teach us, in picture, God's dealings with His people, Israel. The God Who has written His Gospel in the stars, and made the very Zodiac to shine forth the wonders of His grace, can certainly write His Gospel in the lives of His Prophets. And the wonder of it all is, that the story that God writes, whether it be in the stars or in the lives of His Prophets, or in the building of His tabernacle, or in the establishment of His feasts or in the offering of His sacrifices, is all one and the self-same story. The harmony of their message is perfect; there is no crossing of lines, no two voices, no mixture of truths; everything proclaims one message; the same message.

A COMMISSION TO THE GENTILES

"Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city" (*Jon. 1:2*).

"I will make thee a blessing, and in thee shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (*Gen. 12:2, 3*).

Jonah was sent to Nineveh, a great Gentile city. Israel was sent to all the nations. God's purpose in Jonah was to warn Nineveh and give Nineveh an opportunity to repent. God's purpose in Israel was to make His name known to the whole Gentile world.

It is no difficult matter to see how God wrought through His chosen people, always with one end in view, that He might be magnified before the nations.

Each great world nation, in turn, came under the province of God's dealings with Israel, to know of Israel's wonder-working God.

1. Egypt. The selling of Joseph, the dream of Pharaoh, the coming of Jacob and his twelve sons and their families into Egypt under the patronage of the king, all reveal how God sought to lead the mighty nation of Egypt to know Him.

2. Many Nations. The fear of God was placed upon many nations by God's dealings with Israel as they left Israel and traveled through a waste and howling wilderness, until they entered Canaan. There was the passing through both the Red Sea and the Jordan, as by dry land, there were many, many marks of Divine power and prowess, all of which were accomplished that the nations might repent and turn to God.

3. Philistia. The slaying of the giant, the victories of David were all that the people might know "that there was a God in Israel."

4. Babylon and Medo-Persia. The Fiery Furnace episode, Daniel in the lions' den, the three Hebrew children and the burning furnace, the experiences of Queen Esther, all manifest how God moved in mysterious ways to magnify His name among the Gentile world nations.

God certainly called Israel to display His glory and to carry His name to the peoples of the earth.

THE COMMISSION DISOBEYED

"But Jonah arose to flee from the presence of the Lord"
(*Jon. 1:3*).

"But they would not hear" (*Jer. 13:11*).

Jonah refused to become God's ambassador to Nineveh; Israel refused time and time again, to rep-

resent God among the nations. Jonah brought reproach upon his ministry and defamed the name of his God before the heathen sailors. Israel caused God's holy name to be blasphemed among the Gentiles. The name they were sent to magnify, they defamed.

The passage in Jeremiah is a striking one. Jeremiah was told to wear a linen girdle before the people. Afterward he was told to take the girdle and place it under a rock, down by the Euphrates. Then again he was commanded to take the girdle, which had become marred, and wear it in the sight of Israel. When he was questioned as to the strangeness of such an act, he was to say:

"For as the girdle clingeth unto the lions of a man, so have I caused to cleave unto Me, the whole House of Israel and the whole House of Judah, that they might be unto Me for a people and for a name, and for a praise and for a glory, but they would not hear."

The priest tied the girdle about his flowing robes in order that he might serve. God wanted to serve the nations; Israel was His girdle. God wanted Israel to show forth His name, His glory and His praise, but Israel would not hear.

Israel ran away from her commission just as Jonah did. God planted a vineyard in a fruitful hill, He digged it, and built a wall about it, and a tower within it, and then looked for it to bring forth grapes, but "it brought forth wild grapes." That vineyard was Israel.

How the heart of God was crushed by Israel's sins.

God wanted fruit and more fruit and much fruit but He found no fruit. The whole story of Israel's fleeing God, and of Israel's fruitlessness is told by an experience of the Lord Jesus. Christ, being hungry, saw a fig tree, and He went over to it, if haply it had any figs. He found nothing but leaves. He said: "Cursed art thou forever" (*Gk.* For an age). The next day the disciples said: "Master, the fig tree which Thou cursedst is withered away."

Israel was that fig tree. The Lord was looking for Israel to bring forth fruit unto God, but Israel brought forth nothing but leaves.

"Nothing but leaves,
The Spirit grieves,
O'er years of wasted life;
O'er vows and promises unkept,
O'er nations lost, while Israel slept,
And finds from years of strife,
Nothing but leaves,
Nothing but leaves."

PURSUED WITH JUDGMENTS

"But God sent out a great wind" (*Jon. 1:4*).

"I will tell you what I will do to My vineyard" (*Is. 5:5*).

When Jonah broke faith with God and refused his commission, fleeing by ship from Joppa to Tarshish, God sent out a great wind after Jonah. When Israel broke faith with God, when God looked for fruit and found none, He sent out storms after Israel. He said: This will I do to My vineyard—"I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be trodden down: I shall lay it waste and it shall not be digged; but there shall come up briers and thorns upon it." "For the vineyard of the Lord is the House of Israel."

Israel is to-day trodden under the feet of the Gentiles, because she refused to go to the Gentiles and show forth the salvation of the Lord.

The 36th chapter of Ezekiel reveals the whole story of Israel's perfidy.

Verse 17 says: "When the House of Israel dwelt in their own land, they defiled it by their way and by their doing."

Verse 18 says,—“Therefore I poured out My fury upon them.”

Verse 20 to 23 shows how Israel, having profaned God's holy name among the nations whither they went, the nations mockingly said: "These are the people of the Lord, and are gone forth out of His land."

No wonder then that God has sent a storm out after Israel; no wonder that they have been pursued by fire and flood. Oh, Israel, hadst thou but hearkened unto the Lord thy God, and hadst thou not wasted thy substance under every green tree; and hadst thou not profaned His holy name; then, He would have fed thee with the finest of the wheat; He would have filled thy barns with plenty; He would have lifted thy name high above the nations, and He would have established thy going out and thy coming in; He would have made thee a blessing unto the whole earth; and He would have magnified His great and holy name in thee.

But thou didst rebel; thou didst refuse His commands; thou art revolted and gone! Behold therefore the storm of His wrath has broken full upon thee! He is pursuing thee until He shall awaken

thee to the acknowledgment of thy sins, and find thee willing to obey His holy will.

SCATTERED AMONG THE NATIONS

"So they took up Jonah, and they cast him into the sea" (*Jon. 1:15*).

"For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the House of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve" (*Amos 9:9*).

Students will at once acknowledge that the sea, when used as a type, stands for the nations. "And he said unto me, The waters which thou sawest, * * are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." Thus Jonah, cast into the sea, is a type of Israel cast into the nations. And history has verified the type.

Everyone to-day concedes the literalness with which God has carried out the prophecy of our key text in Amos. Where can one go that he does not run across Jacob's sons? Certainly they are sifted among all nations.

For many years Israel has dwelt without a king, and without a prince and without a sacrifice. For many years Israel has been trodden down of the Gentiles. Her glory has fled away like a bird, and her goodness like a morning cloud. She has been smitten, dried up in her root; she is fruitless.

The chosen of the Lord, the people of our God, are desolate in the day of His rebuke; they have been feeding upon wind; they are oppressed and broken in judgment. God blessed them as long as they hearkened to His voice; but now He has sent His storm upon them, and cast them into the sea.

Why didst thou run away from thy God, O Israel? Why didst thou provoke Him to anger against thee? Did not Moses thy great emancipator give thee warning of thy lot, shouldest thou rebel?

Poor backsliding Israel: "Cursed art thou in thy basket, cursed in thy store. Cursed art thou in the city, cursed art thou in the field."

Poor Israel, "The heaven that is over thy head is brass, and the earth that is under thee is iron."

Poor Israel, thou dost grope at noonday, as the blind gropeth in the darkness. Thou dost serve thine enemies. They glory over thee and defame thy God.

Thou art scattered among the nations, scattered to the four quarters of the earth.

SWALLOWED BUT UNDIGESTED

"And Jonah was in the belly of the fish, three days and three nights" (*Jon. 1:17*).

"To restore the preserved of Israel" (*Is. 49:6*).

There are those who choose to deny the possibility of Jonah's remaining alive and conscious in the "God-prepared fish." But the preservation of Jonah in a fish's belly, is easier to believe, by far, than is the preservation of Israel, scattered among all the nations.

Jonah was swallowed and undigested during three days and nights. Israel has been swallowed and undigested during nigh twenty-three centuries.

The greatest miracle of the Bible, a miracle that has been enacted before our very eyes during twenty-three centuries, in this preservation of Israel.

Rev. Banks

Without a country, without a government, without a flag, the Jews have wandered throughout the nations. They have had nothing but God to hold them together, and nothing but God could have held them.

Where is the race that can be nationally dissolved, disintegrated, and sown among every nation, and still preserve its identity?

Individuals from every other nationality, may leave their fatherland and take home in another nationality of the same color, and soon their racial distinction is lost. Their sons, or at best, their sons' sons will be known racially, as the children of the land of their migration.

A German, an Italian, a Russian, a Belgian, an Irishman, a Swede, or any other Caucasian may land in the United States and after some years become naturalized. In one or two generations all their former national recognition is lost. They are not even classed as Americanized Italians, or Frenchmen, etc., they are simply Americans. Yet these people all had a fatherland, and a king, or government, and a flag.

The Jews have none of these: no country, no king, no flag—yet they refuse to be digested. Jews in Russia are Russian Jews; Jews in America are American Jews, and their sons, throughout succeeding generations are Jews—always Jews.

The Jews conform to the laws and the patriotic national glory of every flag under which they may sojourn. They are the best of citizens; they are a people always faithful to the flag—but they are Jews, always Jews. Swallowed, but undigested. Why?

Earth can produce no philosophy that will account for this strange fact. There is but one reason—God. It is possible, just as Jonah kept alive in the belly of the great fish was possible: possible because God decreed it so; possible because what God decrees, He is able to bring to pass. What Israel could never have obtained, the election of God hath obtained.

IN ANGUISH, CRIES TO GOD

"Then Jonah prayed unto the Lord out of the fish's belly"
(*Jon. 2:1*).

"And I will pour upon the House of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication: and they shall look upon Me Whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one that mourneth for an only son" (*Zech. 12:10*).

The bitterness of Jonah's experience as he was carried down to the bottom of the sea; as the weeds wrapped about his head, as he felt that he was cast out of God's sight forever, is a clear and concise setting forth of the bitterness of Israel during the hour known in the Bible as, "The Day of Jacob's Trouble."

Yet it was in the belly of the fish that Jonah learned to pray. It is in the hour of Jacob's trouble, in the hour of Israel's greatest grief, that she will once more turn her face toward her Jehovah God.

Israel is to be made ready to welcome the "Descending Messiah" by the throes of her agony. When darkness shrouds the land; when all joy has gone; when the city is left in desolation; when its gate is smitten with destruction; then Israel will turn her face toward God and cry, "Deliver me, for Thou art my God."

The Bible gives us some foregleams of the language of Israel's prayer, as by the testimony of the "two witnesses" and by the very bitterness of her anguish, she turns her face upward in anticipation of the Lord's return and of her own restoration and rest.

Let us hear Israel's cry: "Return for Thy servant's sake, the tribes of Thine inheritance. * * Our adversaries have trodden down Thy sanctuary * * We are Thine * *. Oh that Thou wouldst rend the heavens, that Thou wouldst come down."

It is true. As Jonah prayed, so will Israel pray. As Jonah cried, "Salvation is of the Lord" so shall Israel cry; and the Lord will hear her cry. Then, "the Lord thy God shall come, and all the saints with Thee." "And the Lord shall be King over the whole earth."

RESTORED TO THE LAND

"Then the Lord spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah onto the dry land" (*Jon. 2:10*).

"I will take you from among the nations, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land" (*Ezek. 36:24*).

When Jonah cried, "Salvation is of the Lord," the fish could no longer hold him, and it vomited him out onto the land; when Israel cries and acknowledges Christ Jesus, as Saviour, and Lord and King, the nations must give back their captives to their own land.

When the Lord opens the graves of His people, and when He says to the nations "give forth;" when He puts "His Spirit within them;" when He brings

them "into their own land," then will Israel receive her Lord.

This restoration of Israel to her land, is the one voice of the Prophetic Word. "The sum of Thy Word is truth," and the "sum of prophecy" is that Israel shall be brought forth from all countries whither God has driven them. God will surely "bring again the captivity of Jacob."

The day shall come when God's chosen people shall again inhabit their land, and "They shall no more be pulled up out of their land."

Israel shall yet "build her waste cities and inhabit them." Israel shall "plant vineyards and drink the wine of them;" Israel shall "make gardens, and eat the fruit of them."

The nations will render every assistance in bringing back the chosen people to the land of her inheritance. "The ships of Tarshish" shall "bring thy sons from afar."

RECOMMISSIONED TO THE GENTILES

"And the Word of the Lord came unto Jonah the second time, saying, Arise, go to Nineveh" (*Jon. 3:1, 2*).

"For I will make you a name and a praise among all the people of the earth, when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith the Lord" (*Zeph. 3:20*).

After Jonah was vomited onto the land, he was recommissioned to go to Nineveh, a Gentile city. When Israel is restored to her land, she is recommissioned to "be a blessing" and in her "shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."

The conversion of Saul of Tarsus is a type of the conversion of Israel. Saul was filled with bitter-

ness toward the Christians, he was en route to Damascus, with letters of authority in his pocket. He was stricken down by the forth-shining of a great light from Heaven, a light above the brightness of the noon-day sun. He heard a voice and cried, "Who art Thou, Lord?" The answer was, "I am Jesus, Whom thou persecutest." Then Saul trembling and astonished said, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" The answer was soon given: "I have chosen him to go far hence to the Gentiles;" and again: "He is a chosen vessel unto Me to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and sons of Israel."

Israel filled with bitterness against the Christians, rejecting the Christians' Christ, shall yet be stricken down by the forth-shining of the glory of the Lord's Second Coming. Israel will cry, "Who is this that cometh from Edom (red), with dyed garment from Bozrah (the vintage)?" Christ will respond, "I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." Israel will at once receive Him, the One with the wound marks in His arms. Immediately she will be commissioned to carry Christ's name and glory to the Gentiles.

THE GENTILES TURN TO GOD

"So the people of Nineveh believed God" (*Jon. 3:5*).

"Lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord. And many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day, and shall be My people" (*Zech. 2:10, 11*).

When Jonah was cast into the sea, the Gentiles aboard the ship, believed God; but when Jonah was cast onto the land and recommissioned, he went to

Nineveh and the whole city repented and turned to God.

When Israel was disobedient and was, as the natural branches of the Olive Tree, broken off, her breaking off, proved the riches of the Gentiles (The men aboard the ship feared God); but, when Israel is grafted in again, restored to her land and given back her testimony; what fullness will her restoration bring!

It is unto Israel, restored to her own land, and saved from her filthiness, that the Lord cries: "Arise and shine, for thy light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon thee. * * And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising."

As Israel once profaned the name of the Lord among the Gentiles so shall she glorify His name. "And the nations shall know that I am the Lord, saith the Lord God, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes."

James, the brother of our Lord, testified in Jerusalem, quoting Peter, and corroborating Peter's statements by proof texts from the Prophet Amos. The purport of James' contention was this. (1) The Church should take out of the nations a people for Christ's name. (2) After this was accomplished, Christ would return to earth again. (3) David's torn down tabernacle should be restored. (4) The residue of men would seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom His name was called.

When Jonah was restored he was recommissioned, and Nineveh, a great Gentile city, believed God and repented. When Israel is restored and re-

commissioned, the Gentiles will hear and heed their testimony.

"And many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of Hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord."

Thus will God blessedly fulfil His promise to Abram: "I will bless thee and make thee a blessing, and in thee shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."

JONAH, A TYPE OF CHRIST

JONAH. A TYPE OF CHRIST

Upon the Jonah Sign Christ Staked His Deity (*Matt. 12:30, 40*).

Wherein the Jonah Sign Attests the Deity (*Rom. 1:4*).

Wherein the Jonah Sign Is Established (*I Cor. 15:20*).

If the Jonah Sign Falls, the Scriptures Fall (*I Cor. 15:3, 4*).

If the Jonah Sign Is False, then the Apostles Were False (*I Cor. 15:14, 15*).

If the Jonah Sign Is Vain, the Cross Was in Vain (*I Cor. 15:17*).

If the Jonah Sign Perishes, then Fallen Asleep Saints Are Perished (*I Cor. 15:18*).

If the Jonah Sign Is Done Away, then Christ's Coming and His Kingdom Are Done Away (*Acts 17:31*).

We have before us a mission of unsurpassed importance. As the study proceeds we will observe how all-important is the Jonah Sign. The resurrection of Christ rests on the Jonah Sign, and on the resurrection rests every vital issue of our faith.

No wonder then, that the enemy is forever seeking to ridicule the story of Jonah in the belly of the big fish, and to discount the historicity and Divine inspiration of the whole Book.

The denial of the literalness of Jonah's experience is a serious matter. Whether was easier for God to bring Jonah forth alive from the belly of the fish, or for God to bring Christ forth alive from the bowels of the earth?

When one ruthlessly mocks the veracity of the Jonah Story he is casting out of court the very thing which Christ Jesus established by His own words, and the very thing upon which Christ based His one and supreme proof of His Deity.

When one denies the story of Jonah three days and three nights in the belly of the fish, and of Jonah vomited out upon the land; he will find it an easy matter to deny the literal resurrection of the Lord Himself.

And then what follows? With no story of Jonah left, and with no resurrection of Christ left, there is nothing left. This is the solemn message of this lesson. The Word of God speaks with plain and positive utterance. "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins * * ye are of all men the most miserable." Our all is staked upon the resurrection of Christ; and the resurrection of Christ and His all, is staked upon the Jonah Sign.

UPON THE JONAH SIGN CHRIST STAKED HIS DEITY

"An evil and adulterous generation seeketh for a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of the Prophet Jonas: for as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (*Matt. 12:39, 40*).

1. Our Lord made positive claim that He was the Son of God. He claimed Deity. He claimed to be more than man, because He said: "A greater than Jonah is here," and, "A greater than Solomon is here."

Christ claimed omnipotence, and omniscience and omnipresence; He accepted Divine worship and claimed to be equal with the Father; He claimed attributes that belong to God alone; in fact, Christ made Himself God.

2. The Jews denied every claim to Deity that

Christ put forth. They contended against all He said of Himself. They refused to bow the knee; they refused to render homage; they rejected Him and despised Him; they went about to kill Him; they nailed Him to the Cross.

3. When the Jews demanded of Christ some proof of His claims, some test of His Deity, He quickly risked His all on the Jonah sign. He did, at times, remind them of the works which He did, as bearing witness of Him, and yet the Lord did not make as final any of these things. He did not base His Deity upon His miracles, nor upon His matchless and holy life, nor upon His marvelous teachings. To be sure Christ wrought as no other man ever wrought; He lived as no other man had lived; He taught as no other man had taught; but Christ swept all of this aside and said: "There shall no sign be given * * but the sign of the Prophet Jonas."

WHEREIN THE JONAH SIGN ATTESTS THE DEITY OF OUR LORD

"Declared to be the Son of God with power, * * by the resurrection from the dead" (*Rom. 1:4*).

When Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus took the body of Christ down from the Cross, and when they placed it in the newly-made tomb, and when they ordered the stone rolled against it—how helpless seemed the Son of God! Where were all His claims? Perhaps He was what He claimed and perhaps He wasn't, as far as what had happened was concerned. To all human appearances He was not God's Son.

Who would have accepted his claims to Deity, as

He lay lifeless and helpless in His tomb? His sun had set in ignominious shame and disgrace. He had wrought miracles and taught the multitudes, but in the end He had succumbed, seemingly, to His foes; and, in seeming impotence, had been led as a lamb to the slaughter.

No one, not even His own disciples knew the meaning of that Cross; they did not know that Christ had, in His dying, spoiled principalities and powers, making openly a show of them.

To them Christ was dead, and all was lost. Chaos had come again. They had thought it would be He, Who would redeem Israel, but their hope was in total eclipse.

1. No wonder Christ did not stake the proof of His Deity upon His miracles or His teachings or His life. Any and all of these gave witness that He was God, but He knew that such a witness would not suffice the people, as He lay cold in death.

2. But Jesus Christ arose from the dead and was, therein, declared to be the Son of God with power.

Who can fathom the power that God wrought, when He raised Christ from the dead? If Christ had been a mere man He could not have possessed that power, within Himself, to take up the life which He had, of Himself, laid down. If He had been mere man, God would not have raised such an impostor from the dead. Therefore the very fact of His resurrection sets the seal to His Deity.

3. But there is more than mere resurrection. Christ was also received of the Father at His own right hand. Raised and made to sit with the Father on His throne. God would not have thus

exalted Christ had Christ made false claims and taught false hopes.

Only God can raise the dead, and had Christ been a mere man, blasphemously claiming Deity, He had remained in the grave unto this very hour. The Jonah sign was Christ dead, buried and in the grave three days; and Christ **alive again**. And this sign, given by the Lord as the test of His Deity, was fulfilled to the letter, establishing our Lord's claims.

WHEREIN THE JONAH SIGN IS ESTABLISHED

"But now is Christ risen from the dead" (I Cor. 15:20).

The question before us is whether Christ fulfilled the Jonah sign? The Word of God plainly says He did. Plain, positive passages state the fact that Christ died and was buried and that He rose again. Besides these positive Scriptures we have additional potent proofs to consider.

1. The very artlessness of the Bible story carries upon its face indisputable testimony to its genuineness. Such statements were never framed up to deceive the world.

The way the women went with their spices to the grave, that they supposed held their Master; the alarm at finding the stone rolled away; Mary's taking Christ for the gardener and suggesting that if He had taken the body away, she would go and bring it again; Mary's cry of "Rabboni," as the Lord pronounced her name; Peter and John's running toward the tomb, upon the announcement of the women that the Lord was risen indeed; John's hesitancy at the open grave, and Peter's rushing

into the tomb; John's hesitancy at the open grave, and Peter's rushing into the tomb; Thomas and his unbelief—all of this, and much more, has every evidence of real happenings, not of hatched-up lies.

2. The despair of the disciples at Christ's death, and their exultant joy at His resurrection was another proof of the fact that the resurrection was real.

The disciples were broken-hearted. They had thought that Christ would surely have redeemed Israel. They had dreams of a wonderful kingdom of power. Now Christ was dead and their hopes were crushed.

No marvel that the message of Christ, as He met the startled, but rejoicing, women as they ran to bring the disciples word of what the angels had said, began with the words "All hail!" or, "O Joy!"

Peter afterward said: "We were begotten again to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."

Do you suppose that any fabricated story, that they themselves had planned, would have imparted such unparalleled, exultant joy in their souls? Impossible.

3. The unchallenged testimony of the disciples and of Paul to the resurrection is a further proof that the Lord arose from the dead.

In reading the Book of Acts one is struck with the way in which the disciples all gave testimony to the resurrection of Christ from the dead. They spoke with a boldness and assurance that brooked no denial. No scribe and no Pharisee dared to chal-

lenge their statement. It was too commonly believed.

The disciples themselves were ready to die for their faith. They knew the Jonah sign was verified.

4. The final proof that we will mention, lies in the fact that Christ appeared in person and with glorified body to many saints, after the resurrection. The disciples had not only seen the empty tomb, and the linen clothes, lying, and the napkin folded by itself, but they had seen the Lord.

Paul recounts some of these appearances. "He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve, after that He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once * * after that He was seen of James and then of all the Apostles. And last of all He was seen of me also, as one born out of due time."

Thus we have assured our hearts that the Jonah sign was verified, and that Christ did arise from the dead, establishing His Deity.

IF THE JONAH SIGN FALLS, THE SCRIPTURES FALL WITH IT

"How that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures;

"And that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures" (*I Cor. 15:3, 4*).

The very Word of God is true or false, dependable or not dependable, upon the Jonah sign. If Christ did not rise from the dead, the Scriptures are no more than fables, and fanciful tales.

Perhaps there are but a few who really know how

the resurrection of Christ is voiced in the Word of God.

1. In the opening chapter of the Bible we think we have the resurrection of Christ set forth in type, by the earth being brought from its watery grave on the third day, and by God's command, "Let the dry land appear."

2. In Genesis 14, we see the resurrection of Christ set forth by the ark resting on Ararat on the seventeenth day of the month. Compare I Peter 3:21.

3. We have in Genesis 22, a type of the resurrection, in the three days' journey of Abraham and Isaac, and in the altar and the delivered son. Compare Hebrews 11:19.

4. In Genesis 41, Joseph delivered from prison after three years of confinement, is a type of the resurrection.

5. In Exodus 14 we see in Israel's passing through the sea three days after the slaying of the Pass-over lamb a picture of the resurrection.

6. In Joshua 3:2, 17, it was after three days that Israel passed over the Jordan—a type again of Christ's resurrection.

7. Besides the above in many passages, Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead. He who repudiates the Jonah sign and denies the resurrection of our Lord, repudiates the Word of God. The two stand or fall together.

IF THE JONAH SIGN IS FALSE, THEN THE SAINTS OF OLD GAVE A FALSE WITNESS CONCERNING CHRIST

"If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain and your faith is also vain.

"Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God" (*I Cor. 15:14, 15*).

Let us note some of their testimonies:

Acts 2:32: "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses."

Acts 4:33: "And with great power gave the Apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus."

Acts 17:3: "Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen from the dead."

Not only did the disciples preach Christ as raised from the dead, fulfilling the Jonah sign, but they also preached Him as the Son of God, fulfilling that which the Jonah sign attested. Note the following:

Acts 2:36: "Therefore let all the House of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made this same Jesus, Whom ye crucified, both Lord and Christ."

Acts 10:36: "Preaching peace by Jesus Christ; He is Lord of all."

Acts 17:3: "This Jesus, Whom I preach unto you, is Christ."

Colossians 2:9: "For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead, bodily."

Thus did the disciples set their inspired seal upon both our Lord's resurrection and upon His Deity.

The greatest denial of all, is the denial of Christ's Deity and His consequent Lordship. All blasphem-

mous heretics climax their "damnable heresies" in "denying the very Lord that bought them."

Let us, who accept the Sign of the Prophet Jonah, continue to give forth our testimony as to our Lord's Deity, and let us always think of Him and worship Him as the only Lord God, and our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

IF THE JONAH SIGN IS VAIN, THE CROSS IS VAIN

"And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins" (1 Cor. 15:17).

1. The efficacy of the Cross rests on the Deity of Christ and His Deity rests upon His resurrection, the Jonah Sign.

If Christ is not raised our faith is vain. Why? (1) In the first place our faith is vain, because if Christ was not raised, He was not Deity, and if Christ had not been Deity, He could not have atoned for our sins.

There are those who seek to annihilate the fact of Christ's Deity in His earth life, they annihilate the power of the Cross to save.

When destructive critics and modernists seek to take away from us the Virgin Birth, and the consequent Deity of Christ, they seek to rob us of a possible Saviour.

Jesus Christ as no more than perfect man, could have possessed no value by which He could have atoned for the sins of more than one imperfect man.

It is Christ, the Son of God, and Christ only as such, that makes it possible for the One to bear the sins of the many; that makes it possible for God to lay upon Him "the iniquity of us all."

(2) In the second place, if Christ had not been raised, every resultant of the Cross would have been lost, for we shall see in our next study, that if Christ is not risen, the saints who were saved and who are fallen asleep in Christ have perished.

2. If the efficacy of the Cross rests on the Deity of Christ, and His Deity rests upon the Jonah sign (and both do rest there) then all who reject the Jonah sign are yet in their sins.

This is God's Word, and when God speaks let "every man be a liar."

Whether he be atheist, agnostic or infidel; whether he be a professed follower of Christ under any name, he who rejects the Deity of Christ, as attested by the Jonah sign, is yet in his sins; he is on the road to hell.

The Scripture is plain and the Scripture is positive: "If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins." And who is this "I am He"? Is it Joseph's son? No. Is it a mere man of the flesh? No. It is the "I Am from above;" it is the "I Am not of this world;" it is the "I Am * * as My Father hath taught Me."

"I Am" is the Jehovah title. Every use of this wonderful "I Am" name of Christ proclaims Him Deity, "Before Abraham was, I am;" "I am the Light of the World;" "I am the Bread;" "I am the Door;" "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life;" "I am the Resurrection and the Life"—all of these expressions, demand His Deity.

Thus, if the Jonah sign is denied, the Deity is denied; if the Deity is denied, the Cross is denied; if the Cross is denied, all men are yet in their sins.

IF THE JONAH SIGN PERISHES, THEN THOSE ASLEEP IN CHRIST ARE PERISHED

"If Christ hath not been raised * * then they also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished" (1 Cor. 15:18).

How startling are these words! They seem to pull from beneath us, the very foundation of all our hopes. We see in them the crash of every part of the superstructure of our faith. We are left of all men the most to be pitied.

Come, ye scoffers of the Jonah story; come ye modernists, who proclaim Christ as no more than man; come ye skeptics, who reject the resurrection of our Lord: Come, behold the havoc that ye have wrought!

"Ye have taken away my Lord," and with your taking, ye have taken away every vestige of my salvation.

Ye men who deny the very heart of the Gospel; go, and stand above the city of the dead; spread abroad your hands and speak forth your blighting denials: go and proclaim, "Ye sleeping saints have perished;" go, rob the dead in Christ, the dead who died in the assurances of their faith, go rob them of every vestige of their hope.

Ye men, ye ungodly men, ye self-corrupted men, ye men of hard speeches, ye men who speak against Him; go stand in the assembly of the saints, in the midst of those who trust His name; go, tell them that Jonah was a myth, that Jesus did not die, that He did not rise again; go tell them that their faith is vain, that they are of all men most to be pitied; go, rob the living saints of their hope, their all and all.

If Christ be not raised then how shall the dead come forth? Our life is secured alone by His life, our resurrection is established alone in His resurrection.

Hark, Christ speaks: "Because I live ye shall live also." No wonder then when Saul of Tarsus saw the Crucified and heard His voice and knew that He Who was dead now lived, no wonder he hurried in his allegiance to the Living One. And what cared Paul for the pains he bore in after years? What cared he for the journeyings, the hunger, and the nakedness; what cared he for the stonings and the beatings and the deaths oft?—he served a risen Christ.

Paul knew Whom he believed. He endured as seeing Him. His heart was enraptured with the assurance of coming things. He gathered all his earthly glory and gain and ruthlessly threw them behind his back, he tossed them into the garbage can, he counted them all but refuse.

What cared he for things of earth, he had seen Him, and His resurrection and His blest return, and from henceforth he lived with the prize of his upward calling before his face.

He who takes from us the Jonah sign takes every vestige of hope as well, and leaves us standing at the tomb of saints flooded in hopeless tears and crying, with no answer but the echo of a wailing cry.

IF THE JONAH SIGN IS DONE AWAY, THEN CHRIST'S COMING AND HIS KINGDOM ARE DONE AWAY

"He hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man Whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead" (*Acts 17:31*).

In this passage we discover that the Jonah sign, which so forcefully declares the resurrection of Christ, not only was the test of Christ's Deity, but was equally the test of Christ's Second Coming, and His reign.

Those who reject the Jonah sign will find it easy to reject the coming of Christ. Those who accept the Jonah sign, must accept the reign of Christ.

1. In Acts 17:31 the word translated "world" refers to this "inhabited earth." Other Scriptures, like Hebrews 1:6-8, positively show that Christ is to judge the world in righteousness, when He, the Firstborn, is brought the second time into the inhabited earth. It is then, and not until then, that God the Father speaks unto God the Son, and says: "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Thy Kingdom."

2. There is, in the Scripture, strong assurance that Christ will reign. For instance in Jeremiah, chapter 31, after God in chapter 23 has promised that He will raise "unto David a righteous Branch, and He shall reign as King, and prosper," and after He has promised that in His day, "Judah shall be saved, and that Israel shall dwell safely," then God adds:

"Thus saith the Lord, Who giveth the sun for a

light by day, and ordinances of the moon and the stars for a light by night, Who arouseth the sea, when the waves thereof roar; The Lord of Hosts is His name: if those ordinances depart from before Me, then the seed of Israel shall cease from being a nation before Me forever."

Thus, so long as the sun rises in the morning and the moon and the stars shine by night; and, again, so long as I am assured that Christ did rise from the dead, I know that God will yet bring His Son into this inhabited earth, and that Christ will reign in righteousness.

The critics and liberalists and all other infidels and unbelievers may deny the Blessed Hope, but His coming is established by the Jonah Sign and Christ will come and reign in righteousness.

DANIEL, THE YOUNG MAN

DANIEL. THE YOUNG MAN

Daniel's Early Training (*Dan. 1:3, 4*).

Daniel's Holy Purpose (*Dan. 1:8*).

Daniel's Undaunted Courage (*Dan. 1:8*).

Daniel's Unwavering Trust (*Dan. 1:11-13*).

Daniel's Reward (*Dan. 1:18, 19*).

The Day of Heavenly Rewards (*II Cor. 5:10*).

There is such a prevailing idea that young men must have their "fling;" that all young men must be bad, before they can settle down and be good; that it is refreshing to open God's Word and discover one young man, who, with his three friends, utterly repudiates such a false standard of ethics.

Young men may and young men should be clean from their youth up. Let the reader observe that if any young man thinks differently and defies the Word of God and dares to sow his wild oats, he will be sure to reap as he sowed.

Sowing the seed by the wayside high,
Sowing the seed on the rocks to die;
Sowing the seed where the thorns will spoil,
Sowing the seed in the fertile soil:
Oh, what shall the harvest be?

Sowing the seed of a lingering pain,
Sowing the seed of a maddened brain;
Sowing the seed of a tarnished name,
Sowing the seed of eternal shame:
Oh, what shall the harvest be?

Sowing the seed with an aching heart,
Sowing the seed while the tear-drops start;
Sowing in hope, till the reapers come,
Gladly to gather the harvest home:
Oh, what shall the harvest be?

Let us remember that the harvest is in the sowing. If we would reap unto life everlasting, we must sow in the Spirit. If we sow unto the flesh, we shall of the flesh reap corruption.

Let us take heed therefore how we sow.

DANIEL'S EARLY TRAINING

"Certain of the children of Israel * * children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science" (*Dan. 1: 3, 4*).

Daniel was one of the children of the captivity. He had been brought to Babylon following the victories of Nebuchadnezzar against Israel.

The fact that he was chosen by Aspenaz, as one of the youths who was "well skilled in all wisdom," speaks well for Daniel's early training.

An additional token of Daniel's home training lies in Daniel's conscientious ideas concerning his diet, and his keeping his body undefiled.

It is impossible to stress too much the importance of the home. It is there that first impressions are received—the impressions that nothing can ever wholly take away.

The Catholics have been reputed to have said that if they could have the training of a child until he was ten, that they could then risk his future, as an adherent to their faith. This may be overstated, yet it contains much of truth.

The plastic years of the teen age really determine the trend of the life. Do parents fully realize the importance of directing the child in the way

that he should go? Do they comprehend the vast scope of the influence of the home?

What was true of Timothy was surely true of Daniel: "That from a youth, thou hast known the Holy Scriptures." Timothy possessed the same unfeigned faith that dwelt first in his grandmother Lois and then, afterward, in his mother Eunice.

Daniel was doubtless the image of his parents in character as well as in face. They had instructed him in the things of God.

How touchingly does Solomon refer to the instruction of his father: "For I was my father's son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother. He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words: keep my commandments and live" (*Prov. 4:3, 4*).

Daniel, too, had received the instructions of a father. No one can doubt that his father was one of those saintly Israelites, who had fully followed the injunction of God, when He said: "And these words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou risest up * * thou shalt write them upon the posts of thine house, and on thy gates" (*Deut. 6:6, 7, 9*).

The greatest need of this hour is the home life that produces sons like Daniel. God give us homes.

DANIEL'S HOLY PURPOSE

"And Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine that he drank" (*Dan. 1:8*).

Many young men want to have their fling; they seem to have a craze to try out the sinful pleasures of this world.

Even Solomon said: "Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy pleasure." Solomon also said: "I sought in my heart to give myself unto wine, yet acquainting mine heart with wisdom."

But not so Daniel. Daniel refused to defile himself. Daniel's way proved far the wiser. Solomon sinned in many things. He grievously departed from God. Daniel never did. While, in after years, Daniel said in one of his wonderful prayers: "I prayed unto my God and made my confession, and said * * We have sinned;" the striking truth still remains that Daniel is one of the few characters in the Bible, which are treated with any fullness, against whom not one condemnatory word is recorded.

It is utterly false that a young man must sow his wild oats; that he must taste the world in order that he may realize its folly.

Young men may live and die without ever having transgressed the highest ideals of rectitude. Nor need any one doubt but that such a course of action always pays—pays immeasurably.

How many homes to-day are wrecked and ruined because the father sinned in the days of his youth. He sowed to his flesh; and his children and his beloved wife, in after years, suffered the harvest of his deeds.

Daniel's course is the sane, the safe, and the satisfying course to pursue. It is the best in the end, the best in the beginning, and the best all the way along.

It never pays to defile one's self in any way.

The young man who smokes, swears, keeps bad company, plays cards, goes to the theater, drinks, gambles, will find out some day to his sorrow, and to the sorrow of all those intimately associated with him, that sin does not pay.

The wages of sin is death. Therefore let us, like Daniel, refuse to defile ourselves. Let us "enter not in the path of the wicked and go not in the way of evil men." Let us "avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it and pass away."

Sin will darken your countenance, destroy your character, degrade your morals, and lead you to the doom of darkness and eternal despair.

DANIEL'S UNDAUNTED COURAGE

"Therefore he requested the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself" (*Dan. 1:8*).

It was a brave stand followed by a courageous step. How dare he do it! Take his stand contrary to the command of the king and to the customs of the court! Even the prince of the eunuchs feared that his consent to Daniel's unheard-of request, would endanger his own head to the king.

But Daniel with much wisdom pled for a ten days' trial—and Daniel won out completely; for at the end of the days the countenances of him and his three friends were fairer and fatter than those of any of the youths, who had eaten the king's meat and who had drunken his wine.

There is a word that goes the round these days. "When you are in Rome do as the Romans do." This was wholly obnoxious to Daniel. He believed

that when he was in Babylon, he should do as God would have him do, having no fear for the consequences.

It would have been the easy thing and the natural thing and the pleasing thing, for him to have graciously accepted the wishes of the king. Was he not a youth thrust by good fortune into the very presence of the king?

Daniel might easily have reasoned thus: "I have every possible chance of favor and preferment now with the prince of the eunuchs; why should I spoil it all with my conscientious quibbles? My raising has been faulty, the requirements of my God are too severe. Why should I be different from others? Why spoil my chances?"

It is always easy to drift with the tide, to follow public opinion, to do the natural thing.

Illustration: We know of a youth who, just before he went to college, spent a while with a civil engineer corps. There were eight in the gang. Most of them young men from the same village. Only one was a Christian. This youth found the habits of the other boys quite contrary to his own.

The real test came at bed time; when he had prepared to retire and the time had come for him to kneel down by the bed, as he had done from childhood. It was a simple thing to do? It did not seem so to him. He dreaded the laughter of the others—for all the men were sleeping in one large room.

Finally, refusing to side-step his responsibility, and to merely pray under the covers, or even to wait until the light was out; he fell on his knees

and began to pray. Some of the boys made fun. One fellow turned a sommersault on his bed and said mockingly, "Now I lay me down to sleep."

When, however, the ordeal was over, the other fellows stood up for the one who had dared to pray, and as he crawled into bed, and quiet came on; he heard a still small voice saying: "My son, I want you to preach My Gospel." That was years ago, to-day that boy is a preacher and he sits here pounding the machine and thanking God as he writes this lesson, thanking God he won out in a very simple but wide-reaching test.

DANIEL'S UNWAVERING TRUST

"Then said Daniel to Melzar * * Prove thy servants I beseech thee, ten days * * then let our countenances be looked upon before thee" (*Dan. 1:11-13*).

Daniel was willing to leave the results of his "sobriety" and faithfulness with God. He knew Whom he had believed. He knew that if he followed the Lord, the Lord would take care of the consequences.

Certainly, results are no affairs of ours anyway. It is ours to stand true; it is ours to obey orders; it is ours to fulfil every word of our God. It is God's to manage the consequences; it is God's to see to it that we suffer no loss; it is God's to work out the results.

"Ours not to reason why,
Ours, but to do, or die."

We are serving a faithful God. He will never leave us nor forsake us. "God is faithful by Whom ye were called unto the fellowship of His Son, Je-

sus Christ our Lord." The word "fellowship" carries with it the thought of "partnership." "We are workers together with God." He calls upon us to be true, to stand with Him undauntingly and unflinchingly; then He will manage our affairs for us.

No man ever lost out by standing true to God's commands. No man ever lost out who trusted God.

"The Lord is my Keeper by night and by day,
He guards me from stumbling, each step of the way:
His strong arm beneath me, His presence so near,
My soul is delivered from doubt and from fear."

DANIEL'S REWARD

"Now at the end of the days that the king had said he should bring them in * * the king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananlah, Mishael, and Azariah" (*Dan. 1:18, 19*).

The results of Daniel's fidelity to God were far-reaching. Also Daniel received many blessings. We will note some of these.

1. Daniel was given special wisdom and understanding in dreams. "As for these four children, God gave them knowledge, and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams."

There can be no doubt as to what Daniel and his friends did, when Melzar, the prince of the eunuchs, had given unto them the privilege of testing out their holy purpose not to defile their bodies with the king's meat and wine. These youths threw themselves upon God. They pleaded their case. They sought Divine favor and blessing. They asked God to make good their stand against the king's demand,

and to give them beyond what Melzar would demand. And this is just what God did.

Let us remind our young men friends, that the way to God is still open. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith."

2. God brought Daniel and his friends into favor and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs.

Instead of losing out, by his stand for the right, Daniel won out. Even the world admires a young man, who is every inch a man; but who is also true blue to his convictions.

During the war, the lad who carried through some daring and dangerous feat, laughing at death and all consequences, was applauded not only by his friends but also by his foes.

God give us manly men—men who are not afraid to stand by the right; men who are not swayed by public opinion and borne along by the crowd! God give us men who know the pathway of rectitude, and who dare to stand in it unmoved by friend or foe!

When we have men like these, men of the Daniel type, then the estimation of the men of the world concerning the God we serve will go up one hundred per cent.

Daniel won out, for more than himself—he won out for God.

"Christian, walk faithfully, danger is near;
On in thy journey, no trembling, no fear:
Snares from without, temptations within,
Seek to enslave thee, once more into sin.

"Christian, walk fearlessly on through the storm,
Dark though the sky with its threats of alarm,
Safe thou shalt walk through each trial and care,
If thou art clad with the armor of prayer."

Be not afraid to stand true. God will crown thy faith and faithfulness with favor.

Young men, "quit you like men, be strong." "Put on the whole armor of God." "Stand in the evil day," and "withstand." You may assure your heart that God, the God of all grace, will give grace to all them "who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth."

3. When Daniel and his three friends were brought in before the king, "in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king enquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in his realm."

What joy must have filled Daniel's heart as he stood approved before the king!

4. Daniel saw his faith vindicated and his cleanness of life rewarded. "Seest thou a man diligent in his business (we think we can also say true to his God, and clean in his life) he shall stand before kings, he shall not stand before mean men" (*Prov. 22:29*).

THE DAY OF HEAVENLY REWARDS

"For we must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, whether he hath done good or bad" (*II Cor. 5:10*).

Let us bring before us, in this last moment, another King than Nebuchadnezzar. Let us see, in front of His throne, others than Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.

Let us imagine that our Lord has come. His throne is set in the Heavens. The saints have been raptured. Before the throne, they stand to receive the things done in the body, whether good or bad. The Lord has come and "His rewards are with Him, to give to every man as his work shall be."

Beloved, Daniel was approved before Nebuchadnezzar—shall we be approved before the Lord of Glory?

Daniel kept his body under, he brought it into subjection; as a result his face was fairer and his knowledge was ten times better than all the young men of the king's realm.

No wonder Paul said, "I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I not as one that beateth the air: but I keep my body under and bring it into subjection: lest by any means, * * I should be disapproved." Daniel stood before Nebuchadnezzar; Paul knew he would stand before the Lord Jesus. Daniel was approved; Paul wanted to be approved. Daniel, had he failed, would have been disapproved, a castaway. Paul, should he fail, would be disapproved, a castaway. The whole matter is one of rewards, not of salvation.

"'Arise, young men, arise!' thy Saviour's loving voice
Now bids thee lift thine eyes and in His life rejoice;
He raised the sleeping dead, and made it grand to live:
For thee His Blood was shed, all help His arm will give.

Arise! for death is nigh, life's day is all too brief;
Like light its moments fly, its gladness and its grief;
Arise, and take thy part in God's tremendous fight;
To arms! stir up thy heart—go forth in Heaven's great
might!

Arise from dreams of fame, from sensual slumber rise;
Keep spotless Christ's dear name, thy wealth seek in the
 skies;

The noblest works await thine aid with high reward,
And, crowned at Glory's gate, thou'lt meet thy risen Lord.

DANIEL, THE FAITHFUL MAN

DANIEL. THE FAITHFUL MAN

Scripture Reading Dan. 6:1-28

Daniel, A Man Prepared for Life's Task (*Dan. 1:20*).

Daniel, A Man of Vision (*Dan. 1:17*).

Daniel, A Man of Undaunted Courage (*Dan. 5:17*).

Daniel, A Man with Unsullied Record (*Dan. 6:4*).

Daniel, A Man Who Worshiped God (*Dan. 6:10*).

Daniel, A Man with a Great Longing (*Dan. 10:2,3*).

Daniel, A Man with a Future Blessing (*Dan. 12:13*).

The child is truly the father of the man. As the acorn holds within its bosom the mighty oak; so does the youth hold within his bosom the larger life and destiny of the man that he will become.

Daniel is one of the few characters of the Bible who stands forth above reproach. He was a manly man; he was a Godly man.

How different is the story of Daniel a man who refused to compromise in any moral issue to the story of the young man, which follows:

Illustration: "Sir, I came into your service uncorrupt in principles and in morals, but the rules of your house required me to spend my evenings at places of public entertainment and amusement in search of customers. To accomplish my work in your service I was obliged to drink with them and join with them in their pursuit of pleasure. I went with them to the theater and the billiard table, but it was not my choice. I went in your service; your interest required it. I have added thousands of dollars to the profits of your trade, but at what expense you now see and I know too well. You have

become wealthy, but I am poor indeed, and now this cruel dismissal from your employ is the recompense I receive for a character ruined and prospects blasted in helping to make you a rich man."

Daniel never allowed the affairs of Babylon to hinder him in his service to God. He put Him first and kept Him first.

Illustration: Queen Elizabeth asked a merchant to go on business for the crown. When he remonstrated, that his business would suffer; the queen replied: "You take care of my business, and I will take care of yours." He obeyed, and served his queen, and Queen Elizabeth turned great volumes of business toward him, which made him a merchant worth the while.

Daniel served God faithfully and God ever honored Daniel.

DANIEL WAS A MAN PREPARED FOR LIFE'S TASK

"And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm" (*Dan. 1:20*).

Daniel, in the days of his youth, was thoroughly prepared for the battle of life.

Early training may at times seem irksome. The youth is full of energy and longs to prematurely get out into the arena of public life. This is altogether unwise.

Dr. Carlisle of Georgia used to say, "It is not life's task you need to dread, it is the preparation for the task."

Foundations must be well laid. The sky-scrapers

in the great city of New York do not all lie above the ground. Before a girder is put into position the great foundation must be complete. It is impossible to go up, until they have first gone down—down to bed-rock.

There are two striking things which stand forth in Daniel's preparation for his lifework:

1. His preparation of character. Daniel from his youth had kept his body undefiled. There is nothing that will stand more to the credit of any young man who wishes to succeed, in the world of business, than a life of sobriety, of righteousness, and of Godliness. Character represents one's greatest asset. Character gives an entree to positions of responsibility and power.

Petty politicians and frenzied financiers may be men of questionable integrity; but the men who reach the highest heights of political preferment, and of solid business success, must be men of integrity. The man who is immoral and unclean may climb far up, but he climbs, only to fall. The success that reaches the highest heights and is stable, must be builded upon unimpeachable morals.

2. His preparation of intellect. Daniel was a man who had "great skill and wisdom in understanding and all knowledge." He was prepared intellectually to look into the face of any man of his day.

The Book of Proverbs magnifies wisdom and understanding. Of course, we are aware that human wisdom is distinct from Divine wisdom. We know that men who have a great intellectuality may have no spirituality. It was the wisdom of this world that crucified the Lord of Glory.

Daniel possessed both the wisdom of this world and the Divine wisdom. It was for this reason that he stood before the king, "ten times better" than all the magicians and soothsayers of the realm.

Let no young man discount the value of a high school or college education; but let every young man know that such an education, apart from the wisdom which cometh down from above, will leave him illy prepared to meet the great issues of life.

DANIEL, A MAN OF VISION

"And Daniel had understanding in all dreams and visions"
(*Dan. 1:17*).

Daniel was pre-eminently a man of a wonderful vision. He outclassed any wise man of Babylon in this; in fact he outclassed all the wise men and the king combined.

This "understanding of dreams" and this "seeing of visions" was the result of the wisdom that Daniel received from God. He did not receive it from men, neither was he taught it, but by the Spirit of God.

The soothsayers and the magicians and the astrol-ogers of Babylon knew nothing of the things of God, neither could they know them, because they were not taught in the schools of men—they are spiritually discerned.

Great men are not always wise. There are those who have gone up the ladder of human knowledge, round by round, until they stand at the highest reach of human knowledge and of human wisdom—yet they know nothing of the things of God. They are ignorant as Hottentots of things Divine.

Why? Simply because things spiritual cannot be discerned by the eye that is psychical—"No man knoweth the things of God save the Spirit of God that is in him."

Daniel had a vision. He had a vision which looked on beyond the tottering thrones of Nebuchadnezzar and his grandson and Belshazzar, on past the thrones of Darius and Cyrus, on past the throne of Alexander the Great, on past the thrones of the Scipioes, on past the thrones of the ten-kingdomed empire which is yet to be.

Daniel in the visions by night beheld, and, lo, "One like the Son of Man came with clouds of Heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. And there was given Him dominion and glory and a Kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His Kingdom shall not be destroyed."

Daniel saw "a little stone without hands," falling down the mountain side and crushing to powder all the kingdoms of men. He saw until that little stone "became a great mountain and filled the whole earth" with its glory.

This is the supreme need of to-day. 'Mid the turmoil and the strife, 'mid the unrest and the upheavals of society; 'mid the sweep of apostasy and arrogant pride; the man of to-day needs a vision.

The vision of coming things is the only balm for his wounds, the only safeguard for sobriety. Men need to know that under the shifting sands of the world's dynasties, there is the Rock of Ages that stands secure. God give us men with a Heavenly

vision; God give us men who live, looking for the blessed hope; God give men prepared in heart and hand to reign with Christ a thousand years!

DANIEL, A MAN OF UNDAUNTED COURAGE

"Then Daniel answered and said before the king, Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another; yet will I read the writing unto the king and make known to him the interpretation" (*Dan. 5:17*).

Daniel in his youth had purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the king's meat or wine. He braved the wrath of the king, and stood fearlessly before Melzar the prince of the eunuchs.

Daniel in his maturity stood with the same fearless courage.

Time and again, with his own life in question, he took his stand: nor did he sway a hair's breadth, or manifest the shadow of a turning.

1. Before Belshazzar and his thousand lords Daniel stood and fearlessly sounded the death knell of the king. He read the writing that had changed the king's countenance, and made the king's knees to strike one against another in fear.

He read the superscription, "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin," and gave the interpretation thereof: "God hath numbered thy kingdom and finished it; thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting; thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians."

2. After the king, Darius, had signed the decree, forbidding any "to ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of the king." After the pen-

alty of being cast into the lions' den had been made sure; Daniel bravely threw open his window and prayed three times a day toward Jerusalem.

How we need men of convictions and men with the courage to carry out their convictions.

It is the fear of man that bringeth a snare. How often we know the path of duty, and the will of God, but we follow not; because we love the praise of men more than the praise of God.

The question that is too often upon our lips, is this: "And what will this man do?" Our Lord's response to such a foolish query invariably is, "What is that to thee? follow thou Me."

"Standing by a purpose true,
Heeding God's command,
Honor them, the faithful few!
All hail to Daniel's Band!

Dare to be a Daniel! dare to stand alone!
Dare to have a purpose firm! dare to make it known!

Many mighty men are lost,
Daring not to stand,
Who for God has been a host,
By joining Daniel's Band.

Many giants, great and tall,
Stalking through the land,
Headlong to the earth would fall,
If met by Daniel's Band!

Hold the Gospel banner high!
On to victory grand!
Satan and his host defy,
And shout for Daniel's Band!"

DANIEL WAS A MAN WITH UNSULLIED RECORD

Then the presidents and princes sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find none occasion nor fault; forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him" (*Dan. 6:4*).

It is said of Daniel "an excellent spirit was in him." His blameless and spotless life was due to this fact. He was without fault, because he had God in him. He knew God, walked with God, talked with God, obeyed God.

The supreme need of the church, is men of the Daniel type. The name of God is blasphemed everywhere because those who carry His name upon their lips, do not carry His life within their hearts.

There is but one way by which we can adorn the Gospel of Christ. That one way is by living the Gospel. An unfaithful Christian can preach the Gospel, but he never adorns it.

Daniel possessed that "pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father" which knows a life "unspotted from the world."

1. His **moral** life was above reproach. In early youth he had kept his body under, and brought it into subjection, and in his maturer years he did not swerve from holiness in act and deed.

2. Daniel's **business** life was above reproach. He was honest, thorough and true. Some may debate the question as to whether honesty is the best policy, but Daniel never debated it. It was not a question of policy with Daniel at all, it was a question of honor and a question of truth, which proved to be the best policy.

Illustration: When a judge had observed how a struggling and impoverished carpenter had refused to do any shoddy work in the building of a fence around his home, he used his influence and secured for the same man the job of building the County Court House.

The clerk who was reproved and fired because he, in honor, told a customer that a certain piece of silk had a flaw, afterward became the owner of the store.

Of course it pays; but, whether it pays or whether it doesn't pay, it is right to be honest and true.

3. Daniel's **political** life was above reproach. He was preferred above all the presidents by the king. Into his hand the affairs of the kingdom were placed.

Daniel had not entered politics with the hope of obtaining some political plum; he had been thrust into politics, because of his unquestioned worth. He never sought the place, the place sought him.

Daniel never used his position of power to bring profit into his own hands. He did not stoop to unseemly action, and court favor by placing in office, under his patronage men who were unfit and unworthy of trust. This fidelity to his trust and refusal to bestow unmerited favor, placed Daniel under the hatred of political antagonists. These men sought his downfall: but they could discover no fault or flaw in his ministrations.

Daniel stood clean above the touch of these earthly critics—he also stood approved of God. "For as much as before God, innocency was found in him."

Many a man can pass muster before the world,

who would fall under the all-seeing eye of God; but Daniel stood accepted before the court of Heaven.

DANIEL WAS A MAN WHO WORSHIPED GOD

"Daniel * * his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before God" (*Dan. 6:10*).

There are several important features in Daniel's attitude to God.

1. He walked in unbroken communion with the Lord. Three times a day he prayed. This was his custom. Once, when deeply burdened concerning his people, he stepped aside from his busy court life, and spent twenty-one days in continued prayer and supplication.

Many of us can scarcely give God ten minutes a day, but Daniel, upon whom so many responsibilities rested, found time to pray.

2. He gave God the glory of every achievement. He claimed no virtue in himself. When King Darius cried into the lions' den: "O Daniel, servant of the Living God, is thy God Whom thou servest continually able to deliver thee from the lions?" Daniel replied, "O king, live for ever." "My God hath sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths."

Daniel gave God the glory.

3. He believed God implicitly. In Daniel 6:23 we read, "So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no hurt was found on him because he believed God." In Hebrews 11:23 we read of the faith that "stopped the mouths of the lions."

Daniel never doubted God.

4. He knew God intimately. The God of Daniel was not a God afar off. Daniel walked with God, as Noah walked with God. He had the Lord always before his face.

No wonder that Daniel was strong and did exploits; for, the people who know their God, always do.

5. He was a man greatly beloved. An angel fresh from the presence of God touched Daniel, he said unto him, "O Daniel, a man greatly beloved" (*Dan. 10:11*). The marginal reading is "greatly desired," or, "greatly delighted in."

Thus Daniel stands before us honored of men and loved in Heaven.

DANIEL, A MAN WITH A GREAT LONGING FOR HIS PEOPLE

"In those days I Daniel was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth; neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled" (*Dan. 10:2, 3*).

The passion of Daniel's heart for his people Israel is most marked. Once and again he set face unto the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and supplication, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes, in order that he might learn of his people's lot.

Daniel's heart throbs are seen in chapter 9, verses 16-19, when he said, "O Lord, according to all Thy righteousness, I beseech Thee, let Thine anger and Thy fury be turned away from Thy city Jerusalem, Thy holy mountain: because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusa-

lem and Thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us.

"Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of Thy servant, and his supplications, and cause Thy face to shine upon Thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake.

"O my God, incline Thine ear, and hear; open Thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by Thy name: for we do not present our supplications before Thee for our righteousness, but for Thy great mercies.

"O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for Thine own sake, O my God: for Thy city and Thy people are called by Thy name."

It was Paul who said, "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart * * for my brethren, my kinsmen, according to the flesh: who are Israelites."

Daniel's heart and Paul's heart burned with the same indescribable yearning in behalf of Israel.

How many of us are there who weep and who mourn because of Israel's sad condition? It is written "They shall prosper that love thee"—but most of us have dropped no tear and felt no pang because of Israel's wanderings.

If some one were to argue that Daniel was a Jew and therefore mourned over the estate of the Jews; then we ask, How many Gentiles carry a burden for their people, as Daniel did for his?

DANIEL, A MAN WITH A FUTURE BLESSING

"But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days" (*Dan. 12:13*).

There are many things said in Daniel's prophecy concerning the end-times. There was to be a time of world trouble, such as there has never been since there was a nation. The coming of the antichrist and the horrors of his reign, and the utter desolation of Israel, are all clearly set forth.

Following these days of trouble, there was to immediately come the time of the resurrection of the dead, when "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake:" when, "they that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever."

It is at this latter time, at the end of the days, that Daniel is to stand in his lot.

The same eyes which beheld Moses and Elijah as they stood in their lot at the transfiguration of Christ, will behold Daniel as he stands in his lot at the end of the days.

The same eyes—yea, every eye will look upon the face of the man who served God and his generation faithfully, untiringly, graciously and fell on sleep.

It is not until then, when we see Daniel raised, glorified and standing with Christ, that we can fully answer the question, "Did it pay for Daniel to go all the way with God?"

"In the crimson blush of morning,
In the glitter of the noon,
In the midnight's gloomy darkness,

Or the gleaming of the moon;
In the stillness of the twilight,
As it shimmers in the sky,
We are watching, we are waiting,
For the end that draweth nigh.

We shall see our Lord in splendor,
And amid a countless throng,
On the clouds to earth descending,
With a movement swift and strong,
And the angels round about Him,
In their dazzling white array,
While before Him sounds the summons
For the final judgment day.

He will welcome all His people,
He will diadem His own;
He will show to them His glory,
And will share with them His throne;
And for ever in His presence
They shall see Him face to face,
While they chant His matchless wisdom,
And extol His wondrous grace.

He is coming, surely coming,
For His promise cannot fail;
And the scoffers shall behold Him,
And before Him they shall quail!
He is coming, quickly coming!
But His coming we shall greet;
We have waited for His advent,
And have listened for His feet."

BELSHAZZAR

BELSHAZZAR

BELSHAZZAR IN LIFE.

He Was a Pleasure Seeker (*Dan. 5:1*).

He Was Given to Debauchery (*Dan. 5:2, 4*).

He Mocked God (*Dan. 5:4*).

He Thought Himself Secure (*Dan. 5:1-4*).

BELSHAZZAR IN DEATH.

His Death Was Not Without Warning (*Dan. 5:5*).

His Death Was Sudden (*Dan. 5:30*).

His Death Was in Fear (*Dan. 5:6*).

His Death Was under Condemnation (*Dan. 5:27*).

The story of Belshazzar takes on living interest as we get an understanding of the surroundings under which the tragedy of his last great feast and his untimely death occurred.

1. The city itself should be described. Babylon was a wonder of the day. Its walls which encircled the entire city were so thick and so high, that they were absolutely impregnable.

The city lay four square, about fifteen miles each way. The gates were of solid brass. The big temple in the center of the city, with its many towers, and the wonderful hanging gardens, were reckoned among the wonders of the world.

The river Euphrates ran directly through the city.

2. At the setting of our story, Cyrus was besieging the city with the hordes of the Medes and the Persians. Belshazzar had a plentiful supply of both water and food, and felt no fear for his safety.

However, Cyrus was, unknown to Belshazzar,

working day and night, digging a new channel for the river, so that he might march his men into the city upon an emptied river bed. This feat was accomplished and the city fell on the night of Belshazzar's feast.

BELSHAZZAR IN LIFE

(A) HE WAS A PLEASURE SEEKER

"Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand" (*Dan. 5:1*).

Belshazzar was feasting when he should have been fasting. He must have been a man of low ideals to "feast" in such an hour. Beyond a doubt he was one of those who loved pleasure. His whole conception of life was summed up in "eat, drink and be merry."

For very shame—feasting when his kingdom was in danger of overthrow.

The "pleasure seeker" is one who makes pleasure his chief aim. There are some things that need to be said to such. Hear this, ye that are given to pleasure!

1. Pleasure chokes the Word of God and hinders it from taking root in the life. "And that (the seed, the Word of God) which fell among thorns are they, which when they have heard, go forth, and are choked by cares and riches and the pleasures of this life" (*Luke 8:14*).

2. Pleasure is a vain and empty thing. "I said in mine heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy pleasure:" "And behold this also is vanity."

Pleasure seekers are never satisfied. Many of

them, like Solomon can even say—"Therefore I hated my life." After all, Solomon was right: "It is better to go to the house of mourning than to the place of feasting."

3. Pleasure seekers are under the wrath of God. "Go to now ye rich men, weep and howl for the miseries that are coming upon you; * * ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton" (*James 5:1, 2*).

At Pompeii, the residents were given over unto the pleasures of this life, until Mount Vesuvius belched forth its lava and fire and smoke, and buried them under its wrath—a picture of the judgments of God that await a world given to frivolity and sin.

4. Pleasure seekers are dead in their sins. "She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth."

Beware ye pleasure lovers. The hardest one to reach for God is the one who is deluged in pleasures. The publican and the harlot, the drunkard and the libertine go into the Kingdom of God before you, ye lovers of the world.

Beware, ye pleasure lovers. You are so engrossed with your rush of gaities that you cannot hear the voice of God.

Illustration: In New York city at the noon hour we stopped to listen to the chimes from some church steeple as they filled the air with "Nearer my God to Thee, nearer to Thee." Then we watched the people. The surging masses were so intent upon their earthward quests, that great multitudes passed by, without even knowing that the chimes, in the tower above their heads, were sounding. Even so

do the pleasures of this world drown the voice of God.

BELSHAZZAR IN LIFE

(B) HE WAS GIVEN TO DEBAUCHERY

"He drank wine before the thousand.

"Belshazzar, whiles he tasted the wine.

"They drank wine" (*Dan. 5:1, 2, 4*).

Pleasure seeking and feasting leads to debauchery. The two go hand in hand. When one gives license to the flesh, in enjoying mirth, he cultivates the grosser nature and soon turns to satisfy the more vulgar desires of the flesh.

Debauchery! What a word! How full of shameful disgust! Who ever dreamed that the fair and the beautiful belle of the ball, was in the pathway to dishonor and shame? Who ever dreamed that the splendid youth, who yielded himself to the music and the dance, would soon be grovelling in the mire of impurities?

Drinking and lust follow close on the heels of pleasure seeking. First, "revellings;" then "drunkenness and such like."

This matter cannot be discussed at length. But "society," to-day, is yielding itself to the vilest of pleasures. Each year new and more hellish theatricals and dances are being put forth to satisfy the cravings of cultivated lusts. God spare our dear young people!

BELSHAZZAR IN LIFE

(C) HE MOCKED GOD

"They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and silver, brass, and iron, and wood, and stone" (*Dan. 5:4*).

The pleasure seeker and the debauched will find it easy to mock God. Belshazzar brought the vessels, which had been taken by Nebuchadnezzar from the Temple of God in Jerusalem; they drank their wine in them; they praised their heathen gods, which were no gods at all.

In all of this Belshazzar offered a double affront against God. He not only debased God's name, by putting to unholy use, the vessels that had been consecrated to an holy use—vessels taken from the Temple of God; but, he also lauded false gods.

There is no depth of blasphemy too base for those who are fully yielded to the love of the world. God is not in all their thoughts. They never use His holy name, save as they cast mire and dirt upon it.

Around many a card table, at many a wine supper, in many a dance hall, there are those who defame the name of the Lord. Consider the insults that have been cast into the face of the Living God. Consider the hard words which have been spoken against Him.

There is scarcely a day that one's heart is not made to shudder as he hears along the broad highways, words, from human lips, that cast slime upon the God of all grace. He Who died for men is defamed of men. They take His name in vain; they continually call upon God to damn this one and that one. Yet, God is always crying: "Look and live."

BELSHAZZAR IN LIFE

(D) HE THOUGHT HIMSELF SECURE

"A great feast.

"They drank.

"They praised" (*Dan. 5:1-4*).

It is easy to discover that Belshazzar thought himself in perfect security. What cared he if the armies of the Medes and of the Persians were encamped about him? He had much food within his city walls—so great a supply that he dared to have a "feast." He had water from the river Euphrates, which flowed through the city. He had an impregnable wall between him and the enemy. The city was safe. Had Cyrus mustered an army twice the size, Belshazzar would have felt secure. The battering rams of Cyrus could never fell so great a wall; no guns of Darius could throw shrapnel over its mighty height.

The man of the world lives in the same sense of false security. He says: "I shall never be in adversity," "I shall not be moved." He says, "How doth God know?" "Is there knowledge with the Most High?"

No wonder then, that the wicked are compassed about with pride; no wonder that "Violence covereth them about as a garment."

No wonder, then, that the ungodly "speak loftily. They set themselves against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth."

Yet, I have seen these same thoughtless blasphemers caught down to destruction as in a moment. I have seen them set in slippery places. I have understood their latter end.

Let the sinner beware, when he thinks himself secure in his evil way, secure against the enemy. He might say, "I have much goods laid up for many days. I will say unto my soul, eat, drink and be merry;" but what if God should thunder forth: "This day shall thy soul be required of thee, then whose shall these things be that thou hast acquired?"

Let no man hide himself under a covert of lies, and think himself safe. Though your covert have walls as thick and as high as those that sheltered Belshazzar, there is a day coming when God, "will sweep away your refuge of lies."

Though you thought to secure yourself from God in the cleft of the rocks and said, "Who shall bring me down to the ground?" yet "the pride of thine heart hath deceived thee." "Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord."

BELSHAZZAR IN DEATH

(A) HIS DEATH WAS NOT WITHOUT WARNING

"In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote" (*Dan. 5:5*).

God stopped Belshazzar in his madness, and gave him full warning of what was about to come to pass. Belshazzar not only saw the part of the hand that wrote, but Daniel came in and read unto him the writing and made known unto him the interpretation thereof.

All of this was done, in order that Belshazzar might turn and repent of his evil ways. But the king did not profit by his warning.

In how many ways, and at how many intervals has God, in faithfulness, warned the wicked.

1. He has sent forth His Prophets, the ministers of His Word. He has said unto them: "As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked but that the wicked turn from his evil way and live." And again, "If thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way * * his blood shall I require at thine hand" (*Ezek. 33:8-11*).

2. He has sent forth His Spirit. "When He is come, He will reprove the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment" (*John 16:8*).

The Holy Spirit is always warning men and He is always calling men to Christ. Let sinners beware, therefore, how they despise the Spirit of grace.

3. He has sent forth His providences. Many a man has been warned of God by certain happenings, events that speak out with no uncertain sound. It was no mere happen so, that placed the young man Saul upon the scene, as Stephen was being stoned. It was no mere co-incidence that threw Onesimus into the Roman jail and almost into the arms of Paul the faithful friend of Philemon and the earnest preacher of the Cross.

God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform, He speaks to men from every angle of human experience.

"Every burning bush is ablaze with God,
But only he who sees, takes off his shoes."

BELSHAZZAR IN DEATH

(B) HIS DEATH WAS SUDDEN

"In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain" (*Dan. 5:30*).

God is longsuffering to usward; He is not willing that any should perish. When, however, the harvest of sin is ripe, and when due warnings have been rejected; then God's judgments often fall, with swift stroke.

"He that being often reproved, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" (*Prov. 29:1*).

Belshazzar had sinned against much light, as this same 5th chapter of Daniel shows. He had a full knowledge of Nebuchadnezzar's experiences; he had known much of God's dealings with men; yet he had sinned more and more blasphemously. God had fully warned him. Then, with every warning rejected, God sent the handwriting on the wall. His hour had come. God's wrath swept down upon him suddenly, and irrevocably.

Even while they were feasting on that momentous night, Cyrus had an army of men digging away, without the city walls; until, at last, a new bed was prepared for the Euphrates. When the river broke through into its new channel, it left an open river bed, under Babylon's brazen gates, upon which the armies of the Medes and Persians hastened to enter the city.

Thus it was that Belshazzar was overtaken. "That night was Belshazzar, king of the Chaldeans slain."

Let no one presume against God. You may boast your seeming security, but you will be caught down to destruction as in a moment.

The whole world has sinned against God. The world has rejected and disowned the Lord of Glory. Its harvest is ripening. One of these days God will say, "It is enough," "the harvest of the earth is ripe." Then will He call to His angel reapers; then will He break the seals of judgment; then will He sound forth the trumpets of His condemnation; then will He pour forth the vials of His wrath; and with great speed will He punish the inhabited earth.

BELSHAZZAR IN DEATH

(C) HIS DEATH WAS IN FEAR

"Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another" (*Dan. 5:6*).

The vision of the hand, writing upon the wall, somehow or other terrified the king. It was a most unusual procedure; it was a most inexplicable thing. What did it all mean—the steady movement of that part of the hand that wrote, and the strange hieroglyphics that were written?

Quickly the wise men, and the astrologers, and the soothsayers, were ordered to appear before the king. They could not read the writing. Then Daniel was brought in and he both read and interpreted the superscription.

Lost sinner, there is a handwriting to-day upon thy wall. Giddy and gay you are feasting away your days; you are living in lust, while 'mid the scenes of your revelry you are blaspheming and reviling the God of all grace. Soon, and with staggering

swiftness, will God send forth the pronouncement of His wrath. You will quail and cringe before the oncomings of His judgments. You will cry unto the rocks and to the mountains saying, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of His wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?" (*Rev. 6:16, 17*).

We beseech the sinner to seek shelter under the covert of His wings. Hide thyself in Him, O lost one.

"While I draw this fleeting breath,
When my eyelids close in death,
When I soar to worlds unknown,
See Thee on Thy judgment throne,
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee."

BELSHAZZAR IN DEATH

(D) HIS DEATH WAS UNDER CONDEMNATION

"Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting" (*Dan. 5:27*).

Belshazzar died undeceived. He knew where he was going. He knew that he was lost. He was found wanting.

If the sinner will only stop and consider he will find himself under the curse. Above him are the thunderings of the broken Law.

Illustration: A man who had driven the four-horsed mail and stage coach, over the Adirondacks for many years, lay dying. He was a Godless man, a Christ-rejecter and a blasphemer. As he died he was in a delirium. He imagined that he was going down the mountain side, and the night was dark.

The lightnings were flashing about him and the thunders were sounding with deadening roar. Then he thought he had lost control of his stage. The horses were rushing madly down, and he could not find the brake. He cried to his wife, something like this: "Quick, I am going down, down, down, and I cannot find the brake." He moved his foot under the covers, he raised up in the bed, he pressed his foot this way and that, and died as he cried once more, "Quick, I am going down, down, down; and I cannot find the brake."

Oh unsaved, beware lest your death find you unprepared, and that you also with God's sentence of condemnation hanging over you, go down to eternal death and to never-ending despair.

BELSHAZZAR'S JUDGMENT

BELSHAZZAR'S JUDGMENT

DANIEL'S ENDICTMENT.

Thou knewest all this (*Dan. 5:22*).

Thou hast not humbled thyself (*Dan. 5:22*).

Thou hast lifted up thyself (*Dan. 5:23*).

Thou hast not glorified God (*Dan. 5:23*).

GOD'S HANDWRITING.

Mene, Mene (*Dan. 5:26*).

Tekel (*Dan. 5:27*).

Upharsin (*Dan. 5:28*).

It seems to us, that there is to be found nowhere, such a ringing indictment against the sinner as there is given us in this study.

The endictment divides itself into four distinct statements, each of which is noticed, in turn. The words which cover Belshazzar's case, cover equally well the case of every unrepentant sinner.

The handwriting, which follows the endictment is a brief, but comprehensive statement of God's sentence against Belshazzar. First we have the charge or endictment and then the sentence.

The minister of the Gospel, the believer in Christ must never condone sin. Our testimony is against sin and not for it. We have no fluttering flags of truce to tender. Whether we live or die we must be true to God and His Word.

Belshazzar passes off the scene. He is slain. Daniel not only remains, but Darius who follows Belshazzar as king, places Daniel at the head of the whole realm, making him the first of all his presidents. If we are true to God, He will honor us before men.

DANIEL'S ENDICTMENT

(A) THOU KNEWEST ALL THIS

"And thou his son, O Belshazzar, * * knewest all this"
(*Dan. 5:22*).

Daniel is standing before King Belshazzar. He is relating the certain conditions that led to Belshazzar's sentence and overthrow. He is bringing against Belshazzar an endictment that presents positive proof of God's justice in "the handwriting on the wall."

The first endictment is: "Thou knewest all this." The sentence follows the narration of certain events quite familiar to Belshazzar. The things that Belshazzar knew were these:

1. He knew that God had given Nebuchadnezzar "a kingdom, and majesty and glory, and honor;" that "all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him: whom he would he slew, whom he would he kept alive; whom he would he put down, and whom he would he set up."

2. He knew that Nebuchadnezzar had sinned, that "his heart was lifted up and his mind hardened in pride." He knew how Nebuchadnezzar had, in this unbridled pride, gone forth and walked upon his palace in the kingdom of Babylon and said: "Is not this great Babylon, for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power and by the glory of my majesty?"

3. He knew how Nebuchadnezzar was "deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him: how he was driven from the sons of men: how "his heart was made like the beasts, and

his dwelling was with the wild asses; they fed him grass like oxen and his body was wet with the dew of heaven."

4. He knew how Nebuchadnezzar, after the end of days, had lifted up his eyes toward Heaven, with his reason restored, and how he had blessed and praised the Most High, acknowledging "that the Most High God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that He appointed over it whomsoever He would."

And is not all of this and much more true of every lost sinner? Is the sinner an ignoramus concerning God? If so, then he is willingly so.

The endictment against the sinner in Romans 1: 18-32 is plain. "The wrath of God is revealed from Heaven, against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men * * because that which may be known of God is manifest unto them."

"For the invisible things of Him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so they are without excuse." "They knew God, but they glorified Him not as God." They were vain, "they became fools." "Wherefore God gave them up."

No wonder then, since the sinner will not retain God in his knowledge, since the sinner has sinned with his eyes open, "knowing all this," no wonder then that God says they "are treasuring up against themselves wrath, against the day of wrath, and the revelation of the righteous judgment of God."

Let the unsaved stop and consider. "Though thou knewest all this." Sinners have not taken plain

positive warnings sent by the Most High God, they have not profited by the light which they have. They have only sinned the more.

DANIEL'S ENDICTMENT

(B) THOU HAST NOT HUMBLD THYSELF

"And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart" (*Dan. 5:22*).

If ever there had been a time for weeping and for wailing that time had come to Belshazzar. If ever there had been an hour for contrition and confession that hour had come to Belshazzar.

A case in contrast is that of Nineveh. The Ninevites "proclaimed a fast and put on sackcloth from the greatest of them, even unto the least of them." Word came unto the king of Nineveh, "and he arose from his throne, and he laid aside his robe from him, and covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes." He sent forth a decree saying; "Let man and beast be covered with sackcloth and cry mightily unto God, yea, let them turn away every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in his hands."

No wonder that God spared Nineveh, for God is a "gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness."

It is always true that "a broken and a contrite heart, Thou wilt not despise, O God."

It is always true that, if we "humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, He will exalt us in due season."

It is always true, that, "if we confess our sins,

He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins."

But Belshazzar "humbled not himself."

The sinner is like Belshazzar. He will not bend the knee. He has a hard heart and a stiff neck. He will not fall down before God, and cry as did the publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

Daniel knew how to seek the face of the Lord by prayer and by supplications, and to pray and make confession, but Belshazzar knew not.

Job could cry: "I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes." But Belshazzar would not humble himself; neither will the sinner humble himself.

Saul of Tarsus knew what it was to be stricken to his face and to fall down before God; but, to-day, men will not bend the knee.

DANIEL'S ENDICTMENT

(C) THOU HAST LIFTED UP THYSELF

"Thou his son, O Belshazzar, * * hast lifted up thyself against the God of Heaven" (*Dan. 5:22, 23*).

Belshazzar had lifted himself against the God of Heaven in two respects.

1. He had brought the vessels of the Lord's House into his banqueting hall, and had drunken out of them.

2. He had praised "the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, neither hear nor know."

Oh, the arrogant pride that consumed Belshazzar!

This was the devil's chief appeal to Eve. "Ye shall be as gods."

This was satan's sin. "Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness."

This will mark the antichrist's spirit. "Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped."

Why is it that men, refusing to humble themselves, will exalt themselves above the God of Heaven?

This spirit of self-exaltation is the spirit of the age. It is this lifting up of one's self above the God of Heaven, that leads the race, on the one hand, to dethrone Christ from His Deity and make Him mere man; and, on the other hand, to exalt man and make him God.

The deism of man is becoming more and more popular.

"The sum of this arrogant cry is found frequently expressed in verse, of which we give a sample:

"Not throned above the stars of night,
Here in America, we must see,
The love of man to man,
A new world, republican,
A Christ not superhuman,
Reborn, in man and woman."

It is the old cry of "Away with Christ, give us Barabbas!"

The Lord is coming one of these days. When He comes, then these haughty Belshazzars will be brought low. Then will men "enter into the rock and hide in the dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of His majesty." "The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men

shall be bowed down. And the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day."

"And the day of the Lord shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low, and the Lord alone shall be exalted, in that day" (*Is. 2:12*).

Belshazzar's spirit of pride and arrogance may dominate the man of this world, and he may lift up himself against the God of Heaven, but God will bring him down, even as He brought Belshazzar down.

"Pride cometh before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall."

DANIEL'S ENDICTMENT

(D) THOU HAST NOT GLORIFIED GOD

"And the God in Whose hand thy breath is, and Whose are all thy ways, thou hast not glorified" (*Dan. 5:23*).

It is passing strange that man is willing to receive lavish blessings from the hand of God, but unwilling to glorify that God.

The great sin that overthrew Nebuchadnezzar was expressed in the words, "This great Babylon which I have built * * by the might of my power."

The great sin of which Moses warned the children of Israel is of the same order. "Beware lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses * * when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, when thy silver and gold is multiplied, and all thou hast is multiplied; * * lest thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth" (*Deut. 8:11-17*).

The same danger is seen in the "rich fool" of

Luke. The rich fool said, "My fruits," "My barn," "My goods," "My soul." God said, "Thou fool."

How many of us leave God out altogether, or else put Him in, in some obscure way. How many self-centered egotists we have! Of the ten lepers healed, Christ said:—

"There hath returned but this one to glorify God."

"Lord help us to remember our sacred debt,
O, by the love that sought us,
O, by the Blood that bought us,
Lord, let us not forget,
O, let us not forget."

If our breath and all of our ways are in the hands of God, it behooves us to recognize Him. If all that we have is from Him, surely all that we do should glorify Him.

"The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof" (*I Cor. 10:26, 28*).

"If I, by grace, be a partaker" (*I Cor. 10:30*).

"Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (*I Cor. 10:31*).

He hath given us all things richly to enjoy, shall we cease to praise Him?

When the redeemed stand before the throne of Christ, then will they rend the heavens with glad acclaim as they glorify the Lamb of God. Then will the living ones, and the four and twenty elders, and innumerable angels say with a loud voice: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory and blessing." Then will every creature that is in Heaven and on the earth and under the earth, and such as are in the sea say:

"Blessing and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb, forever and ever."

Poor, deceived, boastful, selfish Belshazzar, hear thine indictment: "And the God in Whose hand thy breath is and in Whose hand are all thy ways, thou hast not glorified."

Come, sinner, bow the knee—for every knee must bow, and every tongue must confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of the Father.

Come praise Him now with sincere heart. Yield homage to Him.

GOD'S HANDWRITING

(A) MENE! MENE!

"Mene; God hath numbered thy kingdom and finished it" (*Dan. 5:26*).

The axe was laid to the foot of the tree, the hour of grace was passing, the time for the thrusting in of the sickle had come.

Belshazzar, you knew of God's dealings with your father; you refused to humble yourself; you lifted up yourself against the God of Heaven; and the God Who had given you life and all you possessed, and in Whose hand your very breath lay, you did not glorify.

Belshazzar, you have reached the end of the rope, you have gone to the limit in your mad forgetfulness. Behold your doom. "God hath numbered your kingdom and finished it."

Belshazzar, take one last glance at your mighty Babylon, cast your eye just one more time over the thousand lords with whom you feast; behold the

glit! take one parting view of your earthly glories—for God hath written down your doom.

Belshazzar, tell it all “good-by.” You have lived in pleasure and been wanton, you have nourished your heart in a time of slaughter, behold, now, “God hath numbered your kingdom and finished it.”

Let the man of this world stop and consider. His days are numbered. He cannot always continue his rebellion against the God of Heaven. Christ Jesus will surely judge the wicked.

“Thinkest thou this, O man * * that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?”

Dost thou, O sinner, despise “the riches of His goodness, and forbearance and longsuffering”?

Dost thou not know that after thine hard, and impenitent heart, there must come God’s “Mene! Mene!”?

Surely the wicked are doing no more than “treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath, and the righteous judgment of God.”

God will surely “send forth judgment unto victory.” God is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but God will not, cannot keep anger forever. There must come a day, when the sinner has gone beyond the pale of mercies, when God will send forth His “indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil, to the Jew first and also to the Gentile.”

God’s patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was in preparing—but finally the day of wrath came, and God’s handwriting was on the wall.

The doors were shut to the ark, and the floods overswept the whole earth.

Poor sinner, feast on, and laugh on and drink on, thou too, shalt see the handwriting on the wall.

GOD'S HANDWRITING

(B) TEKEL.

"Tekel; Thou art weighed in the balances and art found wanting" (*Dan. 5:27*).

Weighed and wanting! This was God's second word. Belshazzar was not used to being halted and reproved. He was king and he was supreme in Babylon. But, there is One far higher than Belshazzar. When God speaks let the whole world keep silence.

Weighed and wanting! "So then, every one of us shall give an account of himself to God." Every one must step into God's scales and hear God's judgment. The wicked will have no Christ and no Blood to cover his sins. He must face them. Believers have only the judgment of works; their sins are blotted out, their iniquities are gone. Unbelievers must meet the whole array of their evil deeds. "The books were opened and they were judged from the things written in the Book."

Weighed and wanting! When the unsaved are weighed they are always wanting. "There is none righteous, not one." "All have sinned and have come short of the glory of God." "There is not a just man on the earth that doeth good and sinneth not."

When the unsaved step into God's balances and when God's holiness is placed into one side, the sinner will always be found wanting.

The sinner may be sure that his sins will find him out.

God is a just judge and cannot clear the guilty; God is a holy God and cannot fellowship the unholy. What else then, can the sinner expect but, "Tekel," "Thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting"?

When the great day of His wrath comes, who will be able to stand?

When the judgment throne is set, and the records produced, where is the unforgiven and unblood-washed who can pass muster?

Thank God, we who are in Christ Jesus, are secured against the day of wrath. We have passed from death unto life. There is now therefore no judgment to those who are in Christ Jesus. No one can ever lay anything to the charge of God's elect, for "it is Christ Who justifieth."

GOD'S HANDWRITING

(C) UPHARSIN.

"Peres (Upharsin); Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians" (*Dan. 5:28*).

After God's weighing comes God's sentence. "Thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians."

1. It might be well to stop here just long enough to observe that God still "rules in the kingdoms of men, and that He placeth over them whomsoever He will."

We recognize that satan is the god of this age. He is certainly most active in the affairs of men. We know that Christ is not now King over

the whole earth. Yet God is forcing the wrath of men to praise Him; and God is still directing the trend of the age, and He is over the nations.

Nations reap as they sow, the same as individuals reap as they sow. If a nation thinks that it can trample every law of righteousness ruthlessly under foot, without reaping the whirlwind, that nation may learn its lesson, too late.

Nation after nation has risen and fallen. The Word of God clearly testifies of many nations which have come under God's "Peres," and have gone down under the pronouncement of His wrath.

The nations of to-day are swiftly pressing on toward catastrophic judgments. God will surely punish the nations.

2. What is true of nations is true of individuals. Belshazzar had power and authority, but when God spoke, he lost it all. He stood before God as the veriest wretch must stand. His earthly power amounted to nothing.

Once Christ stood before Pilate and Christ heard His sentence from the lips of man. A time is coming when Pilate will stand before God. What will Pilate's place and power amount to then? When God says "Peres;" when God takes one's kingdom and divides it and scatters it, man must acquiesce.

All worldly glory and fame and possession must pass away. Of earthly riches we can take nothing with us. Naked came we into the world and naked we must leave it, unless by grace Divine, we have learned the secret of "laying up treasures in Heaven" where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt and where the Medes and Persians cannot break through and steal.

HEROD, A CHRIST-REJECTER

HEROD, A CHRIST-REJECTER

The Wilderness Preacher (*John 1:6*).

Herod Hears John (*Mark 6:20*).

Herod Puts John in Prison (*Mark 6:17*).

Herod Beheads John (*Mark 6:27*).

Herod's Conscience Is Stirred (*Mark 6:14*).

Herod's Degeneracy (*Luke 13:32*).

Herod Mocks Christ (*Luke 23:11*).

From the time when Herod heard John preach, until Herod arrayed Christ in mock kingly robes and then set Him at naught, covers a period of only some three and a half years, and yet those years discover to us the whole downward trend of a Christ-rejecter.

It is said that Aaron Burr, during his college course at Princeton, was almost persuaded to become a Christian. One of the professors of whom he sought advice, urged him to defer his decision, and not to come to Christ under a wave of revival fire that was then sweeping the college. Burr took the advice of the professor and refused his Saviour. His history is well known. Never did he again come to that hour of decision and take his stand for Christ, and his story is one of shame.

THE WILDERNESS PREACHER

"There was a man sent from God, whose name was John"
(*John 1:6*).

The first scene which we need to get before us in the story of Herod, is a vision of the preacher who came into his life and so effectively moved him.

1. John the Baptist was a man, born of parents who were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and the ordinances of the Lord blameless.

2. John the Baptist was a man sent from God. He was called of God before he was born and he was filled with the Holy Ghost from the time of his birth.

3. Few men have ever been more richly endued and better panoplied for service than was John. He went forth in the spirit and in the power of Elijah. Of men born of women there was none greater than John.

4. John the Baptist was a man well taught in the things of God. Of him we read "Thou shalt go before the face of the Lord * * to give the knowledge of salvation unto His people, by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of God."

5. Jesus Christ bore a wonderful testimony unto John: "But what went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet." For "among those born of women there hath not arisen a greater prophet than John the Baptist."

You have before you, above, a brief view of the man who came into the life of Herod. A man who was rough and uncouth in many ways; he was robed with camel's hair; he ate locusts and wild honey; he evaded the city centers, and preached in the wilderness.

A PREACHING SCENE—HEROD HEARS JOHN

"For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy, and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly" (*Mark 6:20*).

1. Try to get before you a picture of the great crowds wending their way out into the wilderness to hear John preach. More and more his name is being proclaimed, more and more the multitude are thronging to hear him.

2. Herod, the Tetrarch of Galilee, high estate and, accompanied by his wife, presses on with the crowd to hear John. Herod is fascinated. There is something about the mighty man of God that strangely moves him. His heart is stirred. He fears John, he feels somehow the preacher can read his inmost soul.

3. Herod quickly concedes that the fearless preacher is right. John, fixing his eyes upon Herod, unflinchingly reproves this man of authority for his evil life. He says to Herod: "It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife." Herod, with a high sense of honor, knew John was right, and so "he guarded him," and he "heard him," and he "did many things," and he "heard him gladly."

It is easy to discern that Herod was greatly moved; he was convinced of his sin; he was almost ready to count the cost and to pay the price—in other words Herod was almost saved.

4. There are many this day who are at the very door of salvation! They too, have a true witness; they hear the Word; they hear it often and hear it gladly; they do many things, but they turn away and are lost.

Illustration: A ship was returning from an "around the world" cruise. The little village by the sea was all aglow. The returning vessel, which held so many of her own people, was already in sight. Just off the horizon she had been sighted. But the ship went down in sight of home.

To be almost saved, is not to be saved.

"Almost persuaded Christ to believe,
Almost persuaded Christ to receive,
Seems now some soul to say—
'Go Spirit, go Thy way,
Some more convenient day,
On Thee I'll call.'"

Alas! Alas!

"Almost, is but to fail;
Almost, cannot avail;
Sad, sad, the bitter wail;
Almost, but lost."

HEROD PUTS JOHN IN PRISON

"For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife: for he had married her" (Mark 6:7).

We have before us a saddening scene: Herod is hardening his heart. He had heard John preach, he had known the sin of his heart and life, but he had turned away from John and his message.

There is usually one predominant sin which keeps the sinner away from God. He is willing to do "many things," but he is unwilling to do the **one, essential thing**.

In the case of Herod, the one thing was a woman, Herodias by name. To accept John's preaching, and to follow Christ, meant that Herod would have

been compelled to restore Herodias back to Philip. This Herod would not do.

Herod came to the parting of the ways and refused the right; from henceforth his pathway would necessarily be away from God.

The Gospel is a two-edged sword. When received it leads to salvation, and to the following of Christ; when rejected, it leads to condemnation, and separation from Christ. The one who rejects the Lord Jesus and chooses in His stead some known sin will very swiftly take his way into deeper and deeper rejections.

How shameful it is that Herod, who, but a short while before, had heard John and heard him gladly, should now, himself, lay hold upon John and put him in prison.

The question that confronted Herod was the old question of Christ or Barabbas. One of two things had to be done. It was Herodias or John's Christ. It could not be both. "No man can serve two masters." John was holy, and just, and good, and he stood for righteousness; Herodias was evil, and unholy, and corrupt, and stood for unrighteousness.

When Herod chose Herodias, he kept at his side one who had a quarrel against John. Continually the woman nagged at Herod, until, finally, Herod cast John into prison.

Let those who choose Barabbas know that Christ must die; if, on the other hand, Christ is chosen, Barabbas must die. It is either the one or the other; both cannot live.

HEROD BEHEADS JOHN

"And immediately the king sent an executioner, and commanded his head to be brought: and he went and beheaded him in prison, and brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel: and the damsel gave it to her mother" (*Mark 6:27*).

Our fourth scene is a banquet scene. Herod has made a great supper to his lords, high captains, and chief estates of Galilee. During the supper Salome, the daughter of Herodias, danced.

At the crucial moment, when Herod and the guests were greatly pleased, Salome stopped and courtesied before the king. With a great show of splendor, Herod said: "Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it to thee." Then Herod swore unto her saying: "I will give thee, unto half of my kingdom."

The whole program had been before mapped out. Herodias was plotting against John. She knew that if she could only get Herod enamored with Salome's dance, that Herod would doubtless make some such foolish pledge. And she had before instructed Salome to ask the head of John.

At the crucial moment Salome's courage seemed to fail, for she passed quickly out from Herod, to her mother. The mother lost no time to press through Salome her hellish plan, and so, the request was made that the head of John the Baptist should be brought in a charger.

The Bible tells us that the king became "exceeding sorry." He knew that he had placed John in prison, for Herodias' sake; he knew that now he should immediately break his oath, and refuse to slaughter so saintly a prophet.

But, Herod had lost his power for right decision. When he refused to accept the preaching of John his will had weakened; and when he had placed John in prison, his will for the right had utterly collapsed. So, swayed by the supposed honor of his oath, and borne along by the presence of them who sat at meat with him, he would not reject her; "And he sent forth and brought his (John's) head in a charger."

Let those who follow sin know that sin will ensnare them. Let those who refuse Christ beware lest they become engulfed in deeds of dishonor and of shame.

To us, it seems a long, long journey, from Herod sitting in the audience and hearing John, to Herod sitting in the feast, and slaying John. In reality the distance was quickly covered and the descent quickly made. When Christ is once refused, how swiftly does the life move down the evil way.

HEROD'S CONSCIENCE IS STIRRED

"And King Herod heard of Him: (for His name was spread abroad;) and he said, That John the Baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in Him" (Mark 6:14).

Following the death of John, Jesus Christ, of Whom John had so faithfully preached, came more and more prominently upon the scene. The Scripture was being fulfilled which John had spoken: "He must increase, but I must decrease."

Jesus was performing great miracles. He was traversing the land, teaching with great authority; He was doing deeds that only God could do.

The fame of Christ and the story of His marvelous

ministry, had swept beyond the populace, beyond the upper classes, and had come to the palace where Herod was housed with his official advisers.

The affairs of state, which were usually the subject of their conversation, were set aside. Their one consuming topic was the Miracle-Worker, and His mighty deeds.

They were discussing His identity—who He was, and from whence He came. Some, perhaps, were saying He was Elijah, and some said He was Jeremias or one of the Prophets; but Herod, with evident palor in his face, replied, "I know who He is, it is John the Baptist whom I beheaded, he is risen from the dead."

Herod's conscience was fully aroused. The memory of his sin startled him. He felt that the one whom he had slain, had come back and that he must meet him face to face.

And this will some day be true. Those who pursue wickedness must face their wicked deeds, throughout all eternity. The damned in hell, will surely hear the words: "Son remember."

Herod's conscience, which had been dormant for some time, was now awakened and stared him in the face. Let not the men of the world who reject Christ, think that the memory of their sins will never trouble them.

1. When Joseph reproached his brethren concerning their brother, whom they had sold into Egypt, they said one to another: "We are verily guilty concerning our brother." The memory of their deed swept over them and crushed them.

2. When Judas saw what he had done, the money

he held in his hand burned him to the quick, and with a conscience eating at his very vitals, he took the money and threw it down in the Temple, and went and hanged himself.

3. Some one has described Pilate in hell. He is seen stooping over some running stream, and washing his hands. To each one who approached, Pilate is described as showing his hands and saying: "Can't you see the blood upon my hands? It is the Blood of Christ, Whom I delivered to be crucified. I tried to wash it off in a basin on the day of the crucifixion, and I have tried to wash it off during the long centuries, here in hell, but I cannot remove the stain; it stares me in the face and mocks me."

And Herod, too, was faced by the memory of his deed. Of memory it has well been written—

"Which way shall I fly,
Infinite wrath and infinite despair?
Which way I fly is hell,
For I, myself, am hell."

HEROD'S DEGENERACY

"And he said unto them, Go ye and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out demons, and I do cures to day and to morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected" (*Luke 13:32*).

Christ in His travels had come near to Herod's jurisdiction. Some of the Pharisees had said unto Christ: "Get Thee out, and depart hence: for Herod desires to kill Thee." It was at this time that Christ said, "Go tell that fox."

Our Lord did not use that epithet as a stinging slur. He used it to describe the real degeneracy of Herod.

The whole history of Herod's life was before Christ. He knew what was in the hearts of men. Christ had known how Herod once had heard John preach; how Herod had refused the Gospel and placed the preacher in jail. Christ knew the story of the feast, the dance and the beheaded prophet. Christ knew the discussion that had taken place in Herod's inner palace. He knew that Herod had sinned and sinned until the words "that fox" told accurately the condition of his subtle sinning.

It seems almost impossible that Herod should be seeking to kill the Saviour, Whom he once so nearly followed. The malignity of Herod's heart is amazing.

But let us bring this matter closer home. Are not all who reject our precious Lord, crucifying to themselves the Son of God afresh; are not all the unregenerate counting the Blood an unholy thing; are they not treading under foot the Son of God, and doing despite unto the spirit of grace?

After all is said and done, is not each and every one who rejects the Lord Jesus, as guilty as Herod was? We have greater light than he; we have been taught more fully the meaning of the Cross, than he; we have understood more of the power of His resurrection and surely we know more of His return than Herod knew.

Who can discover the unspeakable villainy of the human heart, the degeneracy of the human soul?

It is said of Christ: "He came into the world and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not." Do we know Him? Are we better than they?

It is said of Christ: "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not." Do we receive Him? Are we better than they?

The truth is that all who reject Jesus Christ as Saviour, Lord and coming King have the same spirit that possessed Herod when Jesus said of him, "Go tell that fox."

HEROD MOCKS CHRIST

"And Herod with his men of war set Him at nought, and mocked Him, and arrayed Him in a gorgeous robe, and sent Him to Pilate" (*Luke 23:11*).

This final scene occurred on the day of the crucifixion. Herod appears on the scene mocking Christ, and then, as far as the Bible is concerned, he passes off the stage of action, and is seen no more. Herod had gone his limit: God seemed to say, "Cut him down, why cumbereth he the ground."

"As soon as Pilate knew that Christ was of Herod's jurisdiction, he sent Him to Herod, for Herod was in Jerusalem at that time." Pilate's purpose was, perhaps, twofold. (1) He heard some one in the crowd say that Christ was from Galilee, and he felt that it would afford a splendid opportunity for him, Pilate, to shift the responsibility of a decision in the matter of Christ, onto other shoulders. (2) He may have known that Herod had for a long time desired to see Christ; and, as there was a long standing dispute between Pilate and Herod, he felt that he had an opportunity to assuage their differences—

However that may be, "When Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he was desirous of a long

time to see Him," and, "he hoped to see some miracle done by Him."

Immediately Herod set about to satisfy his curiosity, and to torment the Lord. "He questioned Him, many things." Christ, however, stood like a sheep before its shearers, dumb—"He answered him nothing." "Then, Herod, with his men of war set Him at nought." They arrayed Him "in a gorgeous robe, and mocked Him."

Herod kept this up for some time, but the quiet mien of Christ seems to have startled him, and suddenly he gave orders to remove Christ at once, and to take Him back to Pilate.

The actions of Herod at this time, seem almost unbelievable. Even Pilate gave much consideration to the Lord as He stood in his judgment hall; indeed, Pilate would have delivered Him, had he not feared the Jews and felt for the safety of his throne.

Step by step follow the trail of Herod, the Christ-rejecter as it stands before us.

1. He hears John preach, and does many things.
2. He puts John into prison, for Herodias' sake.
3. He beheads John, and delivers his head in a charger.
4. He fears that John is risen from the dead.
5. He seeks to kill Christ and is called by Christ, "That fox."
6. He arrays Christ in gorgeous robes, and mocks Him.

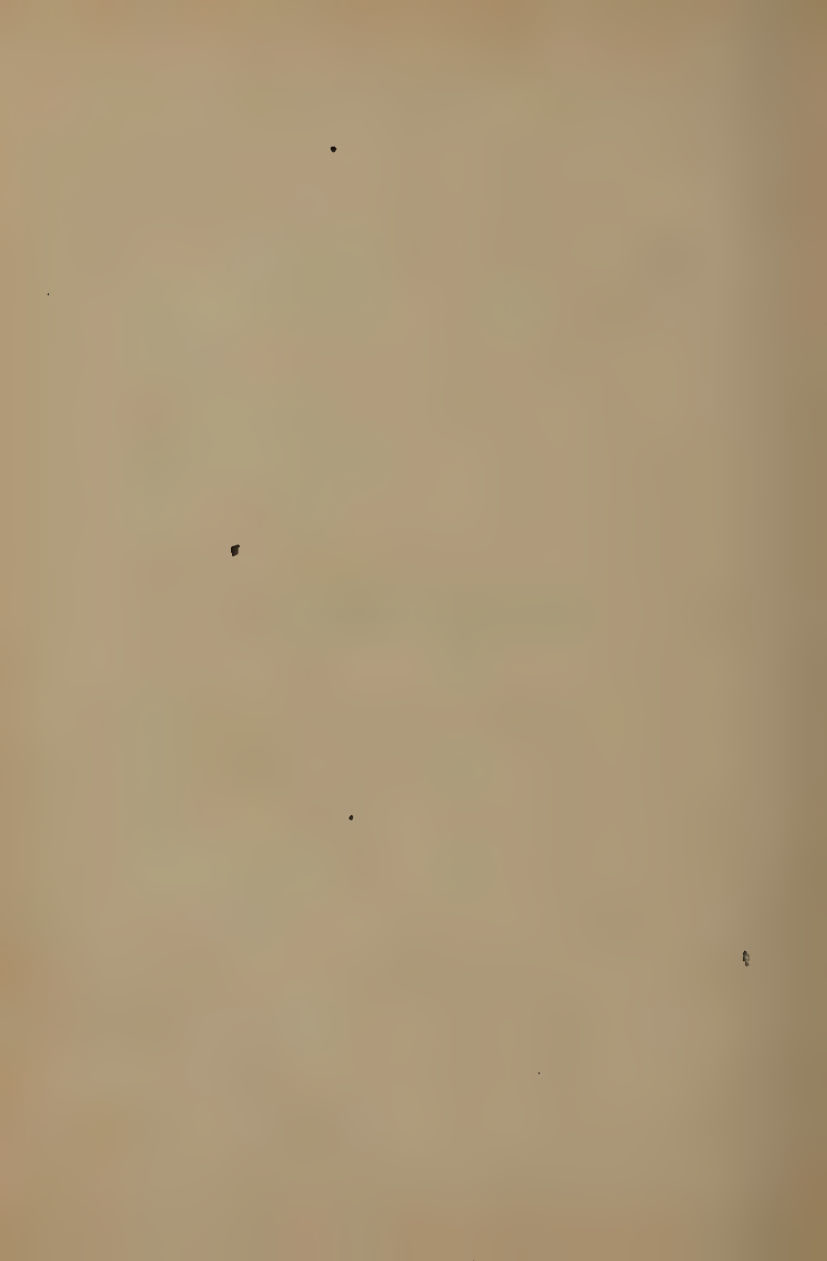
Thus, step by step, rapidly sometimes, do men drift away from their earlier convictions of truth, down toward their final rejection of a loving Lord.

We have wondered that if the final story of the rich young ruler was told, if it would not portray some such an experience as that of Herod. The rich young ruler came running to Jesus and then went

away sorrowful, for he was a man of great possessions. Perhaps, his future days might well be described by such an one as the rich man of Luke 16, who was clothed with purple and fine linen and who fared sumptuously every day, while Lazarus desired to eat the crumbs that fell from his table. Then the rich man died, "and in hell he lifted up his eyes being in torment."

When the story of all Christ-rejecters is finally told, we will have some sad stirring data, that will reveal the heinousness of the human heart.

THE PRODIGAL SON



Sp. Book V. Page 179
Handfuls of Purple

THE PRODIGAL SON

The Home Spurning (*Luke 15:12*).

The Home Leaving (*Luke 15:13*).

The Home Forgetting (*Luke 15:13, l. c. j.*).

The Home Longing (*Luke 15:17*).

The Home Coming (*Luke 15:18*).

The Longings at Home (*Luke 15:20*).

The Welcome Home (*Luke 15:20-24*).

There are different ways of treating this wonderful parable.

First of all there is the dispensational lesson. This is the primary truth. Treating the lesson thus, the prodigal son is a type of the publicans and sinners, the Jewish common people, held in more or less contempt by the scribes and Pharisees. The elder son, of the parable, is a type of these scribes and Pharisees.

Secondly, there is a just use of the parable in making the prodigal son type the one away from God—the backslider, or even the sinner. However, in doing this it is well to only draw spiritual lessons and not press the teaching too far. This kind of an application of the parable must not be pressed to teach any truth that is not fully established by other definite Scriptures.

We have treated the lesson in the second sense, because we see in the story of the prodigal son great possibilities in warning young men and women who are drifting away from God. The parable also shows God's readiness to forgive us when we truly repent. The lesson, as we have treated it, has more to do with backsliders than with those who

have never been saved. The prodigal son does not perfectly type the sinner, because the sinner is not a son, wandering away from God and home; and the sinner is not saved by coming home and confessing his sins. A sinner is saved by acknowledging himself a sinner and by receiving Christ as a Saviour.

This much by way of explanation. In opening the lesson, it might be well to show that the occasion of the parable was the slur of the scribes: "This Man receiveth sinners and eateth with them." See verse 3.

Christ is using the parable to show why He receives the common people, and at the same time He is showing the attitude of the Pharisees toward His love for backsliding Israel.

It is also important to note that the parable includes not only the story of the prodigal son, but also of the lost sheep and of the lost coin.

1. The first part of the parable shows Christ, the Good Shepherd, suffering for the sheep that had wandered away. The ninety and nine in the pasture at home, type the Pharisees, who boasted their righteousness.

2. The second part of the parable shows the true Israel, with the lighted candle, (the Spirit) searching for the coin, and rejoicing when it is found.

3. The third part of the parable shows the great heart of God, the Father, toward the publicans, the sinners of Israel, as He waits to welcome them back to His heart.

In all of this there was doubtless a far-away lesson of the time of Christ's return and of Israel's re-

pentance, and coming home, and full forgiveness and restoration.

THE HOME SPURNING

"Give me the portion of goods that falleth unto me" (Luke 15:12).

The first thing we see in the story of the prodigal son, is his despising his own home. He was ill at ease. Some fanciful stories of the "far country" had come to his ears. He was tired of being tied to home. He despised his birthright; he discounted the privileges of his father's presence and counsel; he wanted to "see the world, and have some real fun."

The second thing is the request: "Give me the portion of goods, that falleth unto me." He not only wanted to break the ties that bound him to his home, but he wanted to deplete the riches of that home by taking from it, his portion of the father's goods.

What a picture of many of our young people. They begin to despise the hallowed "Father's House;" they feel they have outgrown their place in the church; they want to get out and enjoy the world; then they ask for their goods, that they may squander them upon the pleasures of "vanity fair."

But, why should young people think that their Father's House is too circumscribed for them? Surely the Father's counsel is worth the while; surely the Father's presence is the greatest boon that they could have.

But why want to break away from God? Is it the desire for fun? But wait: the very streets of

the Father's city are filled with boys and girls, playing in the streets thereof. Fun? Is there no fullness of joy in God? Are they no pleasures forever more? Where did the young man get the idea that he could not be happy and be saved? Does separation from the things that destroy health and purity of life, and Heaven mean that you cannot have happiness?

Who is it that has robbed the garden of God of all its fragrant flowers? No, it is not true. Young people do not need to feed the appetites of the flesh, with the vulgar dance, with the obsenity of the picture show or with the dangerous game of cards, in order to be happy.

Beware that you spurn not your Father's house! He will seek your best in everything. The far country is a mirage; it is worse, it is the dismal way of darkness and of death.

Be not allured from home by the devil's lie. He will deceive you. He will promise, but he will not pay; he will paint pictures that are not real; his name is deceiver, and he is a liar from the beginning.

THE HOME LEAVING

“And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country” (*Luke 15: 13*).

It is not difficult to get the scene before our minds.

1. There was the “gathering of his goods together.” The packing and the taking stock of his new possessions. How rich he must have felt, and as

he was getting things ready and preparing for his trip how he must have built air castles. Never did the sky seem clearer and never life more promising.

How roseate were his mind pictures of the "good times ahead." He was beside himself with anticipation. Attracted by the novelty of traversing new scenes, of treading new soil, and of entering a new life, all of which he anticipated as filled with joy.

The father, perhaps, gave certain warnings, but the son had no ears to hear dismal forebodings. He considered the father quite ignorant of the larger things, altogether too circumscribed and limited in vision to take in the grandeurs and enchantments of his new life.

2. There were the farewells, the parting words. At last everything was in readiness for the start. The prodigal was aglow with the glory of self-interest; the father sad with disappointed hopes.

Then the lad waved his hand, and started on his way. Perhaps the dear father went with him to the top of the hill, and then with a quiet composure, but with a beating heart, he said: "My son, you have asked your goods, you have broken with your home; new experiences will be yours; you are traveling a very dangerous and robber-infested road; pitfalls are on every hand; your father will not be near for counsel, nor your home at hand for refuge, I greatly fear for your safety, I know what lies ahead; but, my son, if ever you are down and out and you need a friend, remember 'though all others forsake you, yet will not I;' my home is always open, the latch string is on the outside the door; my

heart will never cease to love you, my home will never be barred against you,—my son, farewell.”

Then, as the son, with his portion about him, went on his way, the father stood on the hill crest and watched the son's descent, until the distance hid him to view. Then, sadly he turned and went back alone, but bearing in his heart the boy, and as he went he cried: “How shall I give thee up my son, how shall I make thee as Admah; how shall I set thee as Zeboim?”

THE HOME FORGETTING

“And took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living” (*Luke 15:13, l. c.*).

1. This journey into the far country took more than a day. There was the first night away from home, before there was the second and the third. When the shades of evening fell on that first day out, the son heard quite clearly the words of his father's farewell; for the first time, as he lay upon his bed, he seemed to see the look of troubled fear upon his father's face. He was half mindful to turn back home—but another voice was pressing him on.

And, as day by day he journeyed on, less and less the remembrance of home troubled him. He was becoming dead to the memory of his father's care. Many new things were coming his way, and “why should I worry” was continually on his lips.

2. Slowly, step by step, he went away. No one travels the downward road in a day. We let the things we have heard “slip away” from us. Our

descent is at times so gradual that we scarce detect the fact of our downward trend.

“Drifting away from Christ in thy youth,
Drifting away from mercy and truth;
Drifting to sin, in tenderest youth,
Drifting away from God.”

“Why will you drift on billows of shame,
Spurning His grace again and again?
Soon you’ll be lost! in sin to remain
Ever away from God.”

Each day, the nearer he got to the far country, the less and less he cared for home. He was entering the land of “no restraint,” where free indulgence would be his. No young man can be enamored of a harlot and love his mother, or his sister, or his father or his wife at the same time. The far country is a land where one forgets the home and the father’s care.

3. He “wasted his substance with riotous living.” When he left home he had not anticipated this. He thought he would enjoy himself, of course, but that he would apply his skill and multiply his goods. But, the world was so alluring and so gay, he could not resist its call. His “brakes” would not work. He had gotten into the current of the world and it was too swift for his pull on the oars. He was losing out, and he knew it, but he could not stop.

The young men or the young women of to-day, fascinated by the pleasures of the world, too often lose their bearings, and lose the power to retrace their steps. It is the “movie” and the “theater” and the “card table” and the “dance,” and then

the other things of even darker hue, and then—a wasted life.

THE HOME LONGING

~~24~~ How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, but I perish with hunger" (*Luke 15:17*).

1. This longing for home began when the prodigal had spent all, and when he was left to "feeding swine."

When he began to be in want, those who had treated him so well, during the days while his goods lasted, forgot and forsook him. He was forced to the meanest of tasks for a Jew—the feeding of the swine. Not that alone, but his toil was not sufficient to meet his needs, he was "perishing with hunger," no one would give him to eat.

This is the tragedy of serving sin. Sin will wreck you, rob you, and leave you wounded and naked on the road to die. Sin will take your health, break your heart, wreck your home and then turn a deaf ear to your cry. Sin is a pitiless tyrant. Sin paints roseate pictures of its gardens, but its flowers yield a perfume that produces the sleep of eternal death.

"And in hell he lifted up his eyes being in torment," and begged a drop of water for his parched tongue.

2. His utter despair brought him back to his senses. "He came to himself," then he thought of home. His dire distress brought back the memory of his father's bounty. He said: "How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare." The far country gave him less than was enjoyed by the servants at his home.

Home looked good once more. It had once seemed too tame, and too secluded. To be a "son" was, in the former days, not even worth the while; but now, to be a "servant" was his highest boon. "If I could only get back to the back yard, if I could black my father's boots and do the chores. I would be satisfied," thought the prodigal.

There he sat and there he considered his ways. Home was gone, food gone, character gone, goods were gone, clothing was gone, father was gone, joy was gone—there he sat, and longed for a servant's place.

He was penniless, for he had "spent all;" he was friendless, for "no man gave unto him;" he was hungry, for he said, "I perish with hunger."

Illustration: A blind boy was flying his kite. He seemed the picture of contentment as he sat there, holding onto the string. A gentleman spoke thus to the lad: "My little boy, why do you fly a kite when you are blind and you cannot see it in the sky?" The little blind lad replied, "Mister, I just like to feel it pull." And, there was something that had begun to pull on the heartstrings of the prodigal son—it was the father's house and the father's love.

THE HOME COMING

"I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against Heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants" (Luke 15:18, 19).

1. We find in this youth a new determination: "I will arise and go to my father." Once he had said, "I will arise and go to the far country." Then

he had refused his father's warnings, now he realizes the truth of the father's words. He turns his face back again. That is just what we mean by "conversion." It is turning square around. It is, Halt! Right about face! Forward march!

David said: "I thought on my ways and turned my feet unto His testimonies."

2. The young man says: "I will say, I have sinned." He was awake to the sinfulness of his heart. There was no self-justification; no laying upon others the responsibility of the wasting of his goods; no excusing his career, he simply said: "I have sinned."

When will each of us get down to bed-rock facts and quit blaming our environment, and our associates, and our heredity, and our natural appetites, for our sins. We grant it that they all played their part, but after all, the sinner has no one and nothing to blame but himself. Let him rightly say: "I have sinned."

3. The young man said: "I am not worthy to be called thy son." The pride of the flesh had gone. The prodigal came a suppliant for grace. He claimed no redress, he demanded no favors. He was not worthy. This was just what made it possible to kill the fatted calf and to place the ring upon his hand.

"By grace are ye saved." It is the contrite guilty and the acknowledged unworthy that God delights to robe.

Illustration: Dr. Barnardo told once of an orphan who stood at his door ragged and dirty asking admittance to his orphanage. "And, what have you

to recommend you?" said Dr. Barnardo. "If you please, sir," said the lad, as he held up the ragged edges of his coat, "if you please, sir, I thought these here would be all I needed to recommend me." And that is all the prodigal had—"I am not worthy," and that is all he needed.

THE LONGINGS AT HOME

"And when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him"
(*Luke 15:20*).

These words are enough. They mean much. Beneath the surface lie worlds of truth. They suggest that the father had long been watching the road that led toward home, anticipating the coming of his wayward son.

How plaintive are the words: "All day long have I stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and a gainsaying people."

And God has waited long for the wanderer to return.

Illustration: There is an illustration that has gone the rounds. It is the story of a mother whose daughter had gone into sin. The mother asked her pastor how she might let her girl know her love, and how she might be enabled to get her back again. The pastor asked the mother to bring all the photos of herself that she had, and then he had her write under each picture, the words: "Come home, Come home."

These photos were placed in the mission halls, in the big city whither the girl had gone and where she was lost to her mother's care. One day the girl, friendless and forlorn strolled into one of

those "mission halls." She was discouraged, and ready to die. She felt her mother could not love her now. But when she saw the photo and read the words, "Come home," she wept for joy. She soon was in her mother's arms, a welcomed and forgiven girl.

"Come home, come home,
There is bread and to spare,
And a warm welcome there,
Oh, prodigal child, come home."

THE WELCOME HOME

"The father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

"Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring hither the fatted calf, and let us kill it; and let us eat, and be merry; for this my son was dead, but he is alive again; he was lost, but is found. And they began to make merry" (*Luke 15:20-24*).

This was a grand welcome home.

1. It was tender: "He had compassion on him."
2. It was without delay: "The father ran."
3. It was full of love: "He kissed him."
4. It was genuine: "He fell on his neck."
5. It was restorative: "Bring forth the best robe and put it on him" and, "Shoes for his feet."
6. It was with feasting: "Kill the fatted calf."
7. It was with gladness: "Let us make merry."
8. It was parental: "This, my son."

What a wonderful reception was this! Nowhere was there a shadow to mar the home-coming of the son. There was no expression of suspicion as to the motives that prompted the return; there was nothing to manifest the least unwillingness, on the part of the father, to welcome back his boy.

Think of it! The father ran. Not so the son. The son was dragging one weary foot after the other, wondering if there would be a welcome home; wondering if he dared return in all his plight. God is slow in His wrath, but hurried in His grace. He ran!

He fell on his neck! No waiting until the son was washed and clothed; he just fell upon him as he was, dirt and all, and kissed him. And so it is written: "Unto Him Who loved us, and washed us." Loved us "while we were yet sinners;" and then, washed us from our sins.

The robe with which he clothed the ragged form of his son, is the picture of "God's righteousness." With this spotless white, He robes all those who come by faith to Him.

The ring is the emblem of a pure and an endless love.

The feastings remind us of the happy days ahead—of the marriage supper of the Lamb, and the "happy are they that are called."

"It is just like Him, to take our sins away;
It is just like Him, to keep me day by day;
It is just like Jesus, all along the way,
It is just like His great love."

Just remember one thing—that all of this, the running and the clothing and the ring and the fatted calf and the making merry, was because the son came home, saying: "I have sinned," and because he came home saying: "I am not worthy to be called thy son."

THE RAISING OF LAZARUS

THE RAISING OF LAZARUS

Four Days Dead (*John 11:17*).

The Compassionate Christ (*John 11:35, 36*).

Roll Ye Away the Stone (*John 11:39*).

Lazarus, Come Forth! (*John 11:43*).

Bound with Grave Clothes (*John 11:44, f.c.*).

Loose Him (*John 11:44*).

Let Him go! (*John 11:44, l.c.*).

The miracles, as well as the parables, have wonderful spiritual lessons. In our treatment of "The Raising of Lazarus," we are letting physical death and resurrection type the spiritually dead and raised.

The sinner is dead in trespasses and sins, and when we are saved we are raised with Christ to walk in newness of life; therefore our lesson is Scripturally drawn, and true in its type.

1. There is the fact of death—and all are dead in sins.

2. There is the compassionate Christ, Who "commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

3. There is our part in leading our unsaved ones to Christ, expressed in "Roll ye away the stone."

4. There is the Divine power to save the greatest sinners, seen in "Lazarus, come forth."

5. There is the presence of the old nature, and the old life, expressed by the "grave clothes" that bound Lazarus.

6. There is the promise of victory over sin, in "Loose him."

7. There is the place of service, in "Let him go."

FOUR DAYS DEAD

"Then when Jesus came, He found that he had lain in the grave four days already" (*John II:17*).

There are three whom Christ raised from the dead.

1. He raised the daughter of Jairus. This dear child was just dead. When her father left home in search for Christ, she was at death's door. As he was returning, accompanied by Christ, he was met by a runner who said: "Trouble not the Master, your daughter is dead."

Christ quickly strengthened the crushed spirit of Jairus by saying: "Only believe, and thou shalt see the glory of God." Together they went in, with the mother of the child, and he brought her back from the dead.

2. The second instance, where Christ raised the dead, was the case of the son of the widow of Nain. This young man was at least two days dead, and they were en route to the burial.

Christ stopped the procession, raised the young man from the dead, and gave him back to his widowed mother.

3. The third case of resurrection was that of Lazarus. Lazarus had lain in the grave four days, and his body was already decaying.

Whether was easier? For Christ to raise the daughter of Jairus, or to raise the widow's son, or

Lazarus? The three were all dead. The three were all equally dead. Yet, one was just dead, one was two days dead, and one was four days dead.

All of the unsaved are dead in trespasses and sins. The boy or girl who has come to the years of responsibility is dead. The youth who is traversing the early stages of the evil way, is dead. The great sinner, who has spent years in an immoral life, is dead.

Whether is easier? To save the child, or the youth, or the full grown man?

In either case it takes a power beyond man. Only God can raise the physically dead, and only God can raise the spiritually dead.

The effect of sin is quite different in different lives, but the fact of sin is always the same. It may take more grace to guide the feet of one saved from the depths, than it takes to guide the feet of the one who has just entered the downward way: but it takes the same power to impart salvation to the one as to the other.

THE COMPASSIONATE CHRIST

"Jesus wept. Then said the Jews, Behold how He loved him" (John 11:35, 36).

1. These wonderful words, "Jesus wept," have great significance. Our Lord certainly did not weep, merely because Lazarus was dead, nor merely because He was sorry for Martha and Mary and the mourners about the grave. He knew Lazarus would soon "come forth," and the weeping ones would rejoice.

Christ must have seen in the death of Lazarus,

and in the tears of the weeping ones, the havoc of sin and of death down through the ages. He saw our grief, as well as theirs, and He wept.

2. Carrying out the spiritual lesson in which the death of Lazarus is used as a type of those who are spiritually dead, we are immediately brought to the compassion of Christ over the lost.

When Christ saw the multitude, "He had compassion upon them." There is not a soul that is lost, apart from the yearnings of the compassionate Christ.

Christ wept over Jerusalem, as He saw her Temple overthrown; her cities devastated, and her people driven away among the nations.

Christ also is grieved over sinners and their doom. He is the compassionate Christ.

3. The thing we need to-day is to examine our own attitude toward those who are dead in trespasses and in sins. Do we weep? Have we compassion?

Paul said, "I tell the truth in Christ; I lie not * * I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart * * for my brethren, my kinsman according to the flesh." Are our hearts also heavy? Do we sorrow over the lost?

In the 9th chapter of Ezekiel, an angel with a destroying weapon in his hand, is going forth to slay utterly all who neither sigh, nor cry for the abominations that are done in the midst of Jerusalem. If God took such a course to-day, would we escape the angel of His wrath?

While men are dying around us, and going to

hell, is it the time for us to laugh the laugh of those who have no care for the lost?

Illustration: It is said that Mr. Booth was stirred to action in behalf of the unsaved by the slurs of an infidel. The infidel was speaking on a street corner. He said something like this: "You Christians do not believe in hell because you are not disturbed when a man is lost. If you believed that sinners were going to hell, would you sit still and let them go? No, you would bestir yourselves."

ROLL YE AWAY THE STONE

"Jesus said, Take ye away the stone" (John 11:39).

1. The stone stands for the things which keep the dead within the tomb. It is the hindrance, between the dead man and the light of life.

The people could not have raised Lazarus from the dead, but they could remove the stone. Why should Christ do, miraculously, what could easily be done, naturally?

2. There are many obstacles which lie between sinners and their entrance into a new life, which we can remove. There are stones which we can roll away.

(1) There is the stone of unchristian conduct. David said: "Create within me a clean heart * * then sinners shall be converted unto Thee." David practically said: "My sin, in the case of Uriah, is a stone that must be rolled away, in order that Lazarus may come forth."

In Romans 2:24, we read these startling words:

"For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you."

Illustration: A gentleman in the South land attended our church quite regularly, but he was not a Christian. One day as we sat with him in his office, we said to him, "What is it that hinders you from accepting Christ as your Saviour?" He called us to his desk, and, opening his ledger, he said: "Do you recognize this name?" "Is this man able to pay this account?" We knew the man well enough, for he was prominent in our church, and we knew he could pay his bill.

Our friend then showed us another name, and then another. Each name meant a man who could pay, but who wouldn't. Then, turning to me, my friend said, "When my heart is touched with your sermon, and you call me to accept your Christ, the heads of these old hypocrites stick up between me and God."

Of course, this man should not have allowed anything to block his way. That is one side of the truth. The other side is, "Take ye away the stone."

(2) There are many other stones beside the above. There is the stone of our indifference, and the stone of our neglect. There is the stone of prayerless life, and there is the stone of "no knowledge of the Word." We cannot discuss these each in turn. All we can do is to urge every believer to see to it that there is nothing in his life that will block the way of sinners as they come to Christ.

If we do block the way our hearts will one day be broken because of that fact.

"O Christian friend, what wouldst thou say,
If on that awful judgment day,
They charge thee for their doom?"

LAZARUS, COME FORTH!

"And when He thus had spoken, He cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth, and he that was dead, came forth" (Luke 11:43).

1. We have before us a work that only God can do. People who are brought from death unto life, and are born again, are born, "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

In Ephesians 2:1-4, there is a marvelous picture. There is a sixfold description of the sinner. He is dead; he is walking according to the course of this age; he is walking according to the prince of the power of the air; he is a child of disobedience; he is fulfilling the desires of the lust of the flesh and of the mind, and he is a child of wrath.

In verse 4, we read, "But God hath quickened, hath raised us up, * * hath made us to sit together."

Lazarus was dead, "but God," came along the way, and he was quickened and raised up. The sinner is dead, "but God" comes into his life, and he passes from death unto life.

John Newton was a sinner, down in the depths, a wandering vagabond upon the earth; "but God," and John Newton was transformed into the matchless preacher and hymn writer.

Sam Hadley was a sinner, the vilest of the vile,

a drunkard and an outcast; "but God," and Sam Hadley became the successful mission worker, leading thousands to Christ.

Mel Trotter was a sinner, so low in sin that he had to reach up to touch the bottom, "but God," and Mel Trotter became an evangelist known on two continents and blessed of God.

Thus Christ said, "Lazarus, come forth," and he that was dead came forth.

Illustration: One night we were called to the home of a man who knew not God, who never attended church, and who, because of his regular sprees, had forced his wife to return to the home of her parents. The children she had taken with her.

When I saw him, he had just been in a fight, and the doctor had left him, after binding up his wounds.

As we entered his home, Taylor (for such was his name) said: "Is this preacher Neighbour?" We replied that it was he. He said he had cursed me many times thinking that all the preachers were preaching for nothing but the money. Then he said: "I have sent for you, Mr. Neighbour, because I have a feeling that if I ever take another drink of liquor, I will land in hell."

He continued: "If your Jesus can do anything for an old sinner like me, I want Him to do it."

We read him a few passages from the Word of God, and opened up the way of life, through faith in Christ. Then we said let us tell God about it. We prayed, and a friend who accompanied us prayed, and then we said: "Mr. Taylor, you pray."

He insisted he had not prayed since he was a boy. We said, "Taylor, pray." He replied: "I don't know how to start." We said, "Taylor, start any old way. Just tell God what a sinner you are, and what you want Him to do for you, and tell Him you'll receive Christ as your Saviour."

Then Taylor began to pray. O, how he prayed. In the middle of his prayer, his very tone of voice changed. He became exultant; he began to praise God for the gift of His Son.

Finally we said, "Amen, Taylor, that's enough." We arose from our knees. The grip of his hand still lingers with us, as he said, "Mr. Neighbour, It's done! I'm saved!"

Taylor sent for his wife and soon she returned with the children. From that day Taylor never drank again. Christ had said "Come forth, and he that was dead came forth."

BOUND WITH GRAVE CLOTHES

"And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave clothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin" (John II:44, f. c.).

It is true that Jesus Christ died to save us from our sins; it is also true that when we are saved, we necessarily, acknowledge ourselves as sinners, and accept Christ as a Saviour from our sins.

It is not true that when we are saved, our carnal nature is destroyed, and our old man is annihilated.

The resurrection life, in Christ Jesus, includes the creation of a new man, which is created in righteousness and true holiness.

This "new man" does not mean that the old man is no more. Lazarus was raised from the dead, but he remained bound hand and foot with grave clothes.

Illustration: Out West, a couple of boys, about twelve and fourteen years of age, were saved and afterward baptized.

A few days after their baptism, the mother approached us in tears, and said: "I am sure we have made an awful mistake, for my boys certainly are not saved." We asked: "What's the trouble, my sister?" She told us that the boys had had a fight.

Looking into the face of this anxious mother, we inquired: "My sister, are you saved?" She immediately replied, "Yes, indeed, I know I am saved." Then we queried: "Have you ever had a fight since you were saved?" "Not with my fists," she said. "But, have you never had a fight at all; have you never sinned since you were saved?" She quickly said: "O, I understand it now."

Often young people are saved and, immediately, they have the idea that they will never sin again. They think the grave clothes are forever gone; that the rest of their days they will live free from sinning.

Alas! how quickly they are disabused. The flesh exerts itself, and they are utterly unprepared to meet the promptings, of the old nature, which they thought was gone; thus, they stumbled by the way.

Discouraged and chagrined, they imagine they were never saved. They are almost ready to give up in despair.

Why do Bible teachers, and preachers, not pre-

pare the hearts of young converts for this very thing?

Regeneration is not the patching up of the old man, but the creating of a new man.

The soul that has been born again, will find that the grave clothes are still hanging about him.

The next study will tell us how to reach the place of victory and how Christ says: "Loose him, and let him go."

LOOSE HIM

"Jesus said unto them, Loose him" (*John 11:44*).

We certainly do not want Lazarus left with his grave clothes on. Jesus Christ said, "Loose him."

It is not Scriptural to draw from this illustration, the doctrine of "eradication," or, "sinless perfection." It is altogether Scriptural, to draw the doctrine of the "victorious life."

Suppose the Lord had said to Lazarus, as he stood there bound about in grave clothes, and with his face wrapped about with a napkin, "Now Lazarus, testify to the fact that you are raised from the dead." No doubt, some of the skeptical in the crowd, would have said, "You may be raised from the dead, but you don't smell like it." We need to be more than raised from the dead, we need to be loosed from the garments of the tomb.

God hath not called us unto bondage, but unto liberty in Christ Jesus.

We are not saved from sin's presence, but we may be from its power.

We are not promised that we will never be

tempted, but we are promised victory when tempted, over the world, the flesh and the devil.

Jesus Christ wants His children to yield themselves to Him and to yield their members to Him, as those who are alive from the dead.

Baptism is the type, not only of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and of our union with Him in His death, burial and resurrection, but it also is a type of our old man, "buried with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that we henceforth should walk in newness of life."

In Ephesians 4, we are urged to "put off the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;" and, to "put on the new man." In Romans, God's promise is very definite: "Sin shall not have dominion over you."

Jesus Christ hath not saved us from sin's penalty, to leave us bond slaves to sin's power.

Our Lord will lead us in the train of His triumph; His victory shall be ours; in Him, we will be more than conquerors.

The greatest need of the hour is saints who are saintly; lovers of God, who are lovely; and the washed white, living white. Let us remember the words of Christ: "Loose him."

LET HIM GO!

"Loose him, and let him go" (*John 11:44, l. c.*).

No one dare reverse the order of these words. It is not "Let him go," and then, "loose him," and then, "let him come forth from the grave." God's order is imperative. First life,—*"come forth;"* then

the loosing—"loose him;" and then, service—"let him go."

1. The method of some is to place those in service, in the work of God, who have never been raised from the dead. They are placed in charge of choirs; they are the leading soprano, or the soul-stirring tenor, or thrilling basso. They are sometimes placed in Sunday School work. They are more particularly put into some phase of the social life, of the house of God. For very shame! God never called the unregenerate into the service of the Lord.

2. Then, there is the method of placing those who are saved but who know nothing of having been loosed, into prominent places in church life.

The idea seems to be that the way to hold people, is to give them something to do. Miss A——, or Mr. B—— are both very worldly; they dance, or they play cards, or they attend the movies; but they must be given something to do for God, or else we may lose them.

But, what right have we to place in service, any one, anywhere, unless the Lord has placed them there?

The Bible positively prohibits those from serving God who are not both saved and sanctified. We mean saved and sanctified, in the Bible use of those terms.

Lazarus was raised from the dead, then he was loosed from his grave clothes, then he was told to go. This is a type of a solemn truth.

The plainer statements, of the same truth, are many. Take II Timothy 2:19-22.

(1) In verse 19 we read, "The Lord knoweth them that are His." Here is our sonship, our new life in Christ, our "Lazarus come forth."

(2) In verse 19 l.c., we have this: "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ, depart from iniquity." Here is our separation from sin, our cleansing, our "Loose him."

(3) In the rest of the passage we have the call to service, and we read: "If a man will purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified and made meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work." We take it, therefore, that no one is meet for the Master's use, or prepared unto good work, until he is cleansed, loosed, then we have our "let him go."

Let no one dare to place the unclean in the service of God, when God says: "Be ye clean, ye that bear the vessels of the Lord."

When the worldly church-member is placed in any service in the church he will certainly seek to dominate that service, according to worldly ideals. A worldly trustee, elected because he has money and not because he has piety, will prove a curse and not a blessing to his church. This is true in any line.

Once more, God's order is clearly given in Isaiah, chapter 6.

(1) Isaiah first sees the Lord high and lifted up, and he at once cried: "I am an unclean man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." Here is Lazarus "bound hand and foot with grave clothes."

(2) Following his confession, an angel flies with a coal, taken with the tongs from off the altar, and he says: "Lo, this hath touched thy lips and thy iniquity is taken away, and thy sin is purged." Here is our "Loose him."

(3) Then Isaiah hears the call, "Who will go, and whom shall I send, and he cries, Here am I, send me." Here again is our "Let him go."

When we have been loosed from our grave clothes, then, and only then, we will get God's call, "Let them go;" then we will be able to serve Christ at home or abroad, fulfilling the command: "Go ye into all the world."

